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November 13, 1958 25¢ EDWARD R. MURROW on the Future of Broadcasting

THE REPORTER

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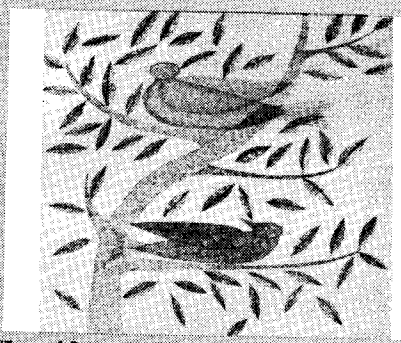

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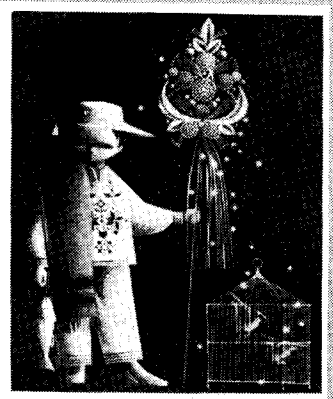

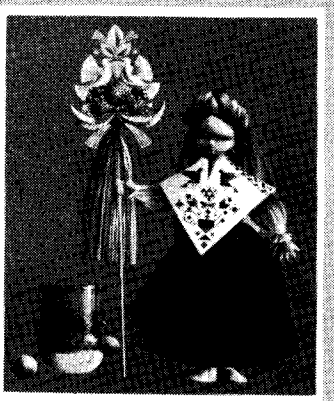

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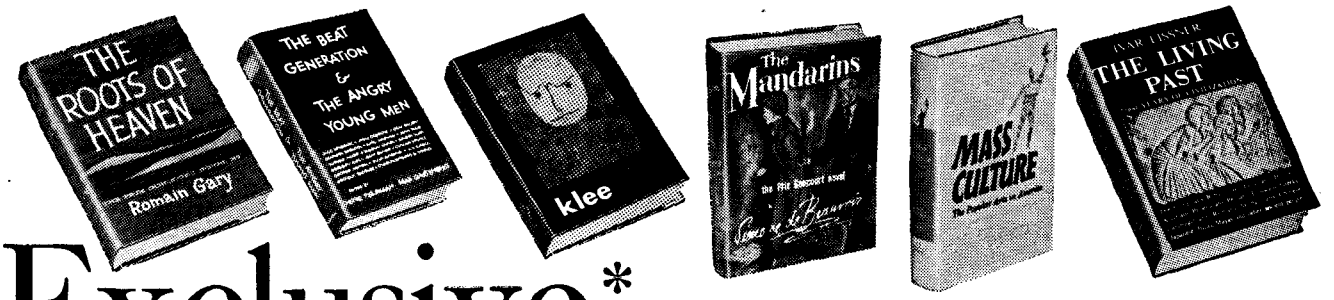

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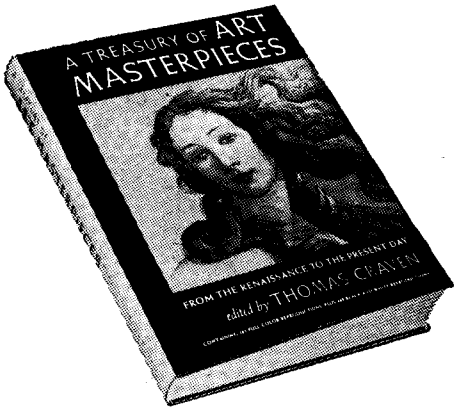

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THE REPORTER'S NOTES

These Mid-Term Elections

Sorry, but our readers will have to wait until the next issue for our comments on the election returns, for it just so happens that we are going to press during the weekend before Election Day. We are confident that two weeks from now our mood will be thoroughly detached and nonpartisan. In truth, it could scarcely be more detached and less partisan than it is now.

As we stubbornly believe in reason and do our best to practice this belief in trying to find some sense in the political happenings that make headlines, we are confident we shall find some meaning in the latest expression of the popular will. But there is no denying that as individual fragments of that sovereign will, we are somewhat shocked at finding ourselves so little concerned with these elections and busy, at the moment of this writing, in giving ourselves a lesson in civics before trudging to the polls to express our sovereign will.

THERE IS A SORT of interregnum in both political parties, and a search for national leaders. While this search is going on and the interregnum lasts, many individual citizens feel a rather disconcerting sense of loneliness. No sensible person, we assume, is sitting around waiting for political heroes, or for an assortment of Godots.

Our political life will certainly become much healthier if freed from father images. The cleanest, the most sensible Presidential election since the war was the one in '48, when the two candidates could not possibly become the objects of hero worship—one too earthy and close to the people, the other too synthetic and distant.

These last six years have taught us a bitter lesson about the danger of images with which large segments of the population identify themselves. We can well do without the images of a benign father or a genial uncle. We need men and, unlike Diogenes, we are searching not just for one man but for several. Diogenes, however, needed only a lantern. In our days, we cannot be satisfied with what we see, for there are too many tricks that can be played by clever manipulators on our field of vision. The modern Diogenes had better carry a lantern in one hand and a bunch of sharp pins in the other, in order to test for flesh and blood.

This is, we fear, the lesson of what has been happening not only during these mid-term elections but ever since the fateful Presidential election of 1952.

They Don't Like Fallout

"Radioactive readings have been abnormally—but not unusually—high in Los Angeles the past week." So the Associated Press reported in a bit of rhetorical sleight of hand that it could only have learned from those master prestidigitators, the "spokesmen" of the Atomic Energy Commission. The facts were less ambiguous: the level of radiation had risen—presumably as a consequence of the tests in Nevada—to 1,200 micro-microcuries, which is twenty per cent above the official "tolerable level for human consumption" (whatever *that* means).

The AEC has assured indignant Angelenos that there is "no danger,"

CASALS AT THE U.N.

The single sound, the solitary sight,
The small man and his instrument as one—
So did this sovereignty of art and light
Hold all the nations in dominion
That peace now ruled; and the surrounding air,
Infected hourly by the warring word,
Was purified by this man playing there
And hearing more than all who listened heard.
One man, one passion, this is what prevailed
Over a sickened world and made it whole;
One truth, one man, one hour had availed
To reinstate the abdicated soul
Of this great body and remind it of
The practice and the potency of love.

PASTERNAK IN RUSSIA

They cut him out of their protesting flesh
As if they could be rid of what he is
By amputation. But the wound will bleed
Internally, and in pain
Throb in the severed conscience—theirs, not his.
For his is whole, and theirs the obsessive need
For riddance; and his solitude
So rich a world beside their poverty
That exile cannot harm. They are exiled,
Not he. They damned,
He free.

—SEC

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and Dr. Willard Libby has even gone so far as to declare in all solemnity: "We don't like fallout." We don't either; nor do we like disingenuousness about fallout.

When queried by a *Reporter* correspondent, an AEC official said: "Somebody's going to get some fallout every time there's a shot. Our decision to shoot is based on how much fallout there's going to be and it wasn't accidental that the fallout hit Los Angeles. We knew it would, but we don't think it's any more than the people would get from normal background in a two months' period."

But what happens to people when their "normal" exposure over a two-month period is concentrated into a few days? The AEC doesn't say, because it doesn't know. No one knows. All we know is that we are playing with immensely potent forces that we only imperfectly comprehend. On this, informed scientific opinion is unequivocal. Dr. Paul Saltman, University of Southern California biochemist, comments:

"I'd like to say something to relieve the public mind about the dangers of this high radioactivity level. But I can't say it. Radiation exposure is a cumulative thing. What happens today we always have with us."

And Dr. A.H. Sturtevant of the California Institute of Technology, a leading authority on the genetic effects of radiation, said to our correspondent:

"I don't want to contribute to a panic, but I think the statements out of Washington were outrageous . . . I would have advised them not to go ahead with the shot. It seems to me that it was pretty clear that it was bad policy to set off so many tests in so few days."

WHAT IS AT THE ROOT of this "bad policy"? Nothing less than a mad bureaucratic rush to get in as many big bangs as possible before the opening of the Geneva negotiations for the suspension of nuclear tests. Mr. John A. McCone, chairman of the AEC, gave some indication of what was in the back of the commission's mind when he warned—almost simultaneously with the Nevada explosions—that our offer to suspend such tests for one year will "delay,

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if not prevent" the development of clean nuclear weapons.

But what does Mr. McCone think we are going to do with these clean weapons when we have them? The Russians, after all, are already sitting comfortably on a stockpile of big, fat, dirty ones. Are we going to turn over to the Russians our new blueprints so that they can manufacture clean weapons too? And if they are not quick enough in producing them, shall we suggest a resumption of lend-lease? Surely Mr. McCone isn't recommending that we stick to clean nuclear weapons while allowing the Russians to use dirty ones?

John XXIII

A major political contest took place lately in the Sistine Chapel, the most beautiful arena that men of different natures and opinions ever had at their disposal for their deliberations. But politics is politics, even when played at the loftiest level and restrained by the rules of an ancient ceremonial. Ballots were cast, groups of voters shifted until, near the end of the third day, a new Pope was elected.

There is not much sense in using such terms as Right or Left, progressive or reactionary, for they scarcely fit the political game played in the Sistine Chapel. Yet there have always been definite alternatives in the inner politics of the Catholic Church, particularly since the Vatican lost its secular power over the Roman state. These alternatives are represented by two major lines of policy that the successive Popes have followed. The power of the Church is either firmly centralized and exercised according to the principles established by the supreme head of the Church, or is maintained by harmonizing the trends and needs of the national churches and the various religious orders.

Probably because he was a commanding figure in his own right and reigned for nineteen fateful years, Pius XII brought this authoritarian, centralized policy to an extreme. The election of John XXIII marks a swing in the opposite direction. He was not born an aristocrat like his predecessor. During his long career he held positions at the outposts of the Catholic Church, in lands where anti-clerical or anti-Catholic forces were predominant. He knew how to get along with the most ruggedly independent of all Catholics and the most fiercely dogmatic of anti-clericals when he was Nuncio in Paris. He knew how to get along with difficult people and how to safeguard both the interests and the dignity of the Church.

This son of peasants is described by those who know him as devout, cultured, and superbly poised. It is also said that he is endowed with a robust sense of humor. He certainly showed evidence of this when, in his first address to the Cardinals who had just elected him—a nearly seventy-seven-year-old man—he spoke of the twenty-two Supreme Pontiffs named John, and added, "Nearly all had a brief pontificate."

'The Whispering Frontiers'

I cherish this, Thy rigorous conception,
And I consent to play this part therein;
But another play is running at this moment,
So, for the present, release me from the cast.

With these words from the epilogue to *Doctor Zhivago,* Boris Pasternak might have informed the Swedish Academy of his decision to refuse the Nobel Prize. What Pasternak actually did say was much more terse but what it amounted to was very much the same thing: he was doing what he had to do "because of the meaning attributed to this award in the society I live in."

It is significant—and entirely appropriate—that the most vulgar and malicious of the published attacks against him should have come from the pen of David Zaslavsky, who at Stalin's command did the same kind of hatchet job on Gorki in 1934, and who as long ago as 1917 had been contemptuously dismissed by Lenin as "a blackmailer." The old order changeth, but ceaseth not.

In an early story, Pasternak said of his art that "from the whispering frontiers, it talks of infinities." This is probably as good a definition of true art as one could discover; and like all true art, when it talks of infinities it also shakes worlds.

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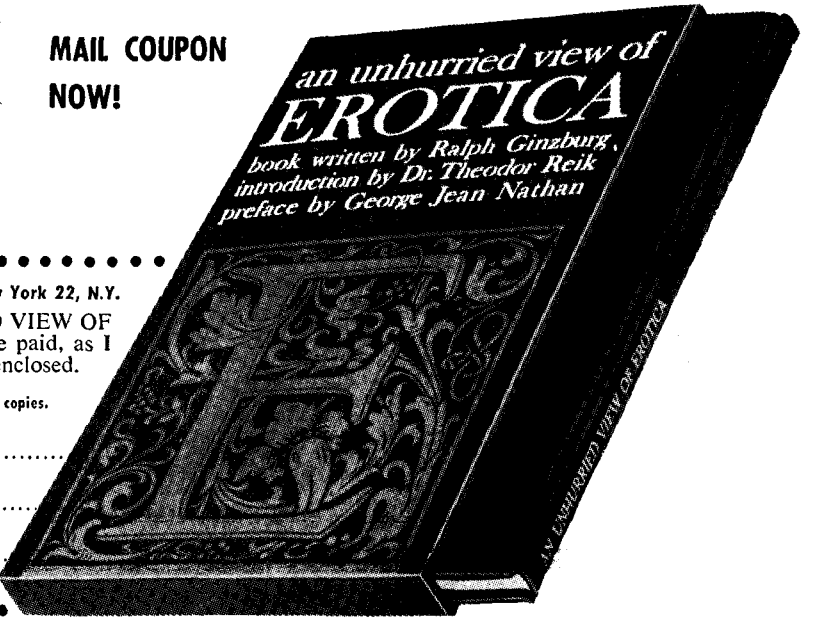
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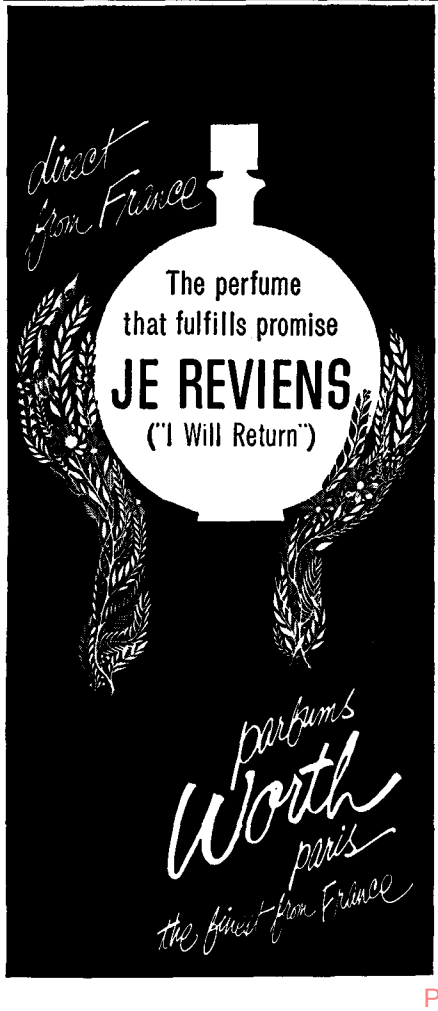

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CONFUSION AT BUFFALO

To the Editor: I have read Robert Bendiner's article on "De Sapio's Big Moment, or, The Rout of the Innocents" (*The Reporter,* October 16) with a great deal of appreciation and pleasure.

As a district leader at Buffalo, I cast our delegates' seven votes for Tom Finletter at the New York County Executive Committee caucus. Together with my fellow eggheads, I was disappointed at the results. And together with the vast majority of them, I am gratified that if the U.S. senatorial candidate could not be Finletter it should be someone with the outstanding record and broad liberal views of Frank Hogan.

Much foolishness and some overcomplicated analyses of the events of August 25 and 26 have led many voters into a state of confusion second only to that which existed in Buffalo. Thus my thanks to Mr. Bendiner for unconfounding your readers.

ALICE SACHS
Democratic Assembly Candidate
Ninth District
Manhattan

To the Editor: As always, Mr. Bendiner does a masterful job of political analysis and writing.

GEORGE S. COUNTS, Chairman
Liberal Party of New York State
New York City

To the Editor: It may well be that Mr. Bendiner's presentation of the motivations resulting in the interesting moves and countermoves of the various principals at the Democratic convention was well reasoned. However, motives are often affected by self-interest in any field of endeavor, and politics has no monopoly in this area. But at least in the Democratic Party convention these motives were tested in an arena of free and open decisions and not in a smoke-filled room. This could not have been said of the Republican counterpart. This was not commented upon by Mr. Bendiner, and in this sense he missed the real point of these conventions.

LEONARD N. COHEN, District Leader
West Side Democratic Club
Fifth Assembly District
New York City

To the Editor: There can be no dispute that the Democratic convention at Buffalo dealt the cause of the Democratic Party and of liberalism in New York State a severe blow. The goings-on in Buffalo achieved the amazing feats of damaging Governor Harriman's reputation and influence, of branding as a boss-picked candidate Frank Hogan, who as the respected district attorney of New York County has been one of the few truly independent political figures in the state, and of seriously

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disillusioning many who were again looking to the Democratic Party to furnish new leadership on the national and international scene.

Even the "pros" now admit that had the nomination gone to Mr. Finletter, Governor Harriman's re-election would not have been in doubt, and there would have been no "Democrats for Rockefeller." Thus, as Mr. Bendiner rightfully points out, the results of Buffalo may well be ironic. Governor Harriman, who was favorably inclined toward Mr. Finletter, will probably run substantially behind Mr. Hogan because of Mr. Rockefeller's appeal to independent and liberal Democrats, disillusioned by Buffalo but not so disillusioned that they would vote for Mr. Keating.

RICHARD S. LANE, President
Lexington Democratic Club
Ninth Assembly District
New York City

VETERANS' FUND RAISING

To the Editor: Ralph Lee Smith ("Waving the Flag and Passing the Hat," *The Reporter*, October 2) did a fine job. It is not pleasant for a committee chairman to have to dig into skeletons in the closet such as fund raising, but we felt it was something that had to be done.

We feel that Mr. Smith has done our people a favor by writing this story.

OLIN E. TEAGUE
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

IN DEFENSE OF STUDENTS

To the Editor: Marcus Cunliffe is one of two or three Englishmen who have an unusually good understanding of American life. Therefore it is a shame that near the conclusion of a good article ("The Herd, the Self, and the Gulf Between," *The Reporter*, October 2) he unloads the following sentence: "To most students, college life in the United States is a medley of athletics and crude vocationalism." This is utter balderdash. Mr. Cunliffe doesn't know "most" American college students nor for that matter "most" American colleges.

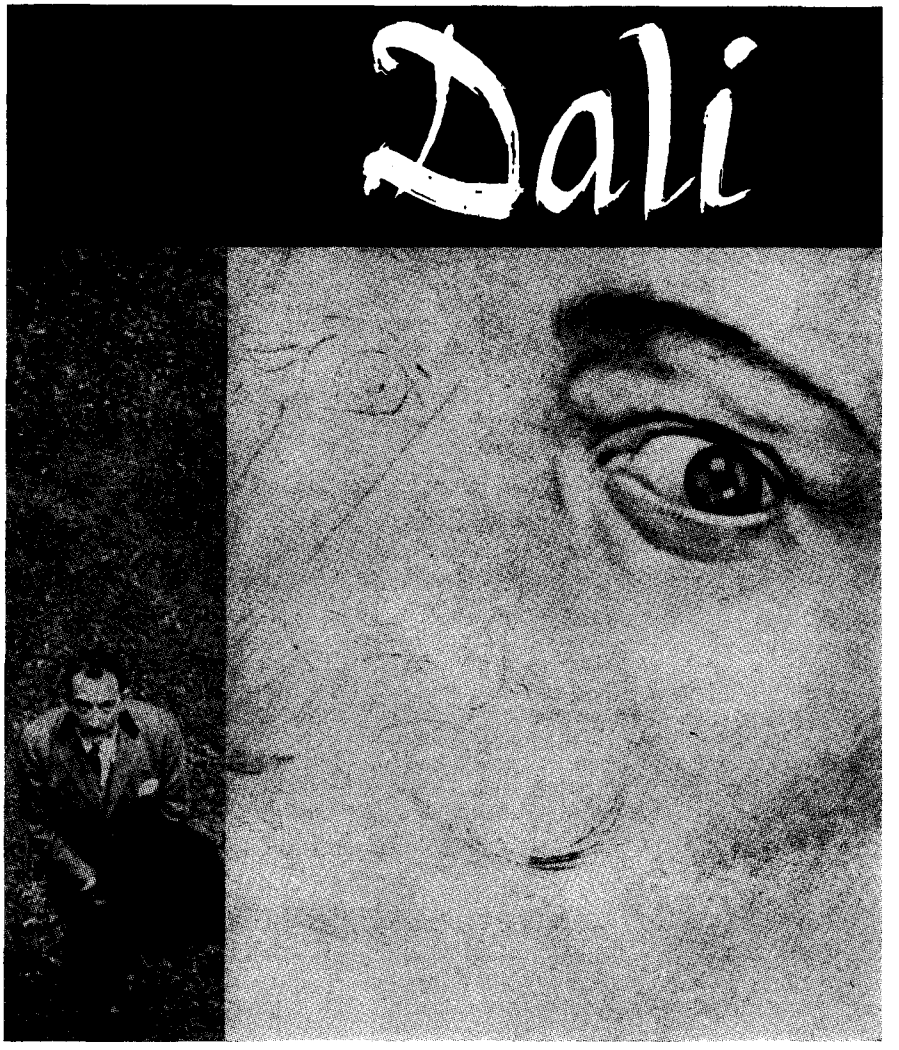
This is an insult to the great number of earnest and hard-working American college students who are interested in an education, and only that.

RUSSEL B. NYE
Michigan State University
East Lansing

DOCTOR ZHIVAGO

To the Editor: I found the excerpts from "Doctor Zhivago" (*The Reporter*, July 10, August 7, and September 4) upon my return from the Soviet Union. The excerpts are extremely well selected. I believe that to a considerable extent they reflect the real historical and ideological significance of the novel, and *The Reporter* performed a unique service in bringing them to the attention of a great many people.

ERNEST J. SIMMONS
Russian Institute
Columbia University



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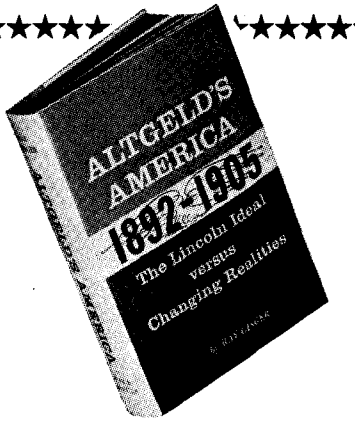

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WHO— WHAT— WHY—

MOST AMERICANS probably have only the vaguest idea of where Laos is. Nevertheless, as **Max Ascoli** points out in his editorial, America's involvement in the affairs of that tiny, far-off nation raises issues that are neither trivial nor transient. **Haynes Miller,** a lawyer from Tennessee, spent thirteen months working for the comptroller's division of the International Cooperation Administration in Laos, where, he says, "It was my duty to find out what actually happened to the dollars Congress has been appropriating to carry out our foreign-aid program." The shocking experiences recounted in his article are not the misadventures of one man alone. They are, in essence, a national experience: an exceedingly unpleasant one but not necessarily a disastrous one—if only we are willing to learn from it.

POLITICAL EXPERTS and observers in Britain find themselves performing somersaults. It seems only a few months ago that they were all predicting the return of the Labour Party to power; now, it would seem, Labour hasn't a chance. **Alastair Buchan,** our regular British correspondent, reports on this remarkable change in the British political weather. . . . Our Washington editor, **Douglass Cater,** who for a year has been traveling around the world as the beneficiary of an Eisenhower Fellowship, has returned to his post, and with this issue resumes his first-hand accounts of Washington and national affairs. . . . **John H. Troll,** a physicist, is vice-president of Electronics Corporation of America. He directed some of the original design work on the Sidewinder missile and has been guiding other weapons and space development as an industrial contractor. . . . **Edwin Newman** is NBC correspondent in Paris. . . . **Isaac Deutscher's** latest book is *Russia in Transition* (Coward-McCann). . . . **George Bailey** recently spent a month in India, where he was able to observe the facts of Indian politics and compare reality with legend. He found the trip "a moving experience with more than a few major surprises."

Edward R. Murrow's broadcasts from London during the war, his courageous television handling of McCarthyism, his "See It Now" and "Person to Person" programs, and now his new "Small World" have made him perhaps the best known of our commentators. Yet Mr. Murrow is far from happy about the achievements of American broadcasting, as he made clear in a speech he delivered before a group of his colleagues in Chicago on October 15. We publish the full text of the speech as a public service, and will be happy to provide reprints free of charge to individuals and groups who request them. . . . Three articles deal with the theater. Staff writer **Marya Mannes** discusses a fundamental vice to which she attributes the unsatisfactory quality of some current New York plays. Her book *More in Anger* (Lippincott), containing a number of essays that have appeared in this magazine, has just been published. . . . **John Rosselli** is with the Manchester *Guardian*. . . . **Justin O'Brien,** who lectures on the contemporary French theater in the graduate school at Columbia University, reports on a brilliant visiting troupe from Paris. . . . **Alfred Kazin's** latest book is *The Inmost Leaf* (Harcourt, Brace). . . . **Al Newman** is a former war correspondent and a former member of *The Reporter* staff. . . . **Hans W. Held** teaches at Rutgers University. . . . **Madeleine Chapsal** is a French free-lance writer.

Dong Kingman traveled through the Far East for the State Department as an "artist-ambassador," speaking, painting, and showing his work. The water buffaloes on our cover are from his Laos sketchbook.

WE ARE PLEASED to announce that **Irving Kristol,** formerly co-editor of the Anglo-American monthly *Encounter,* has joined our staff as Editor.

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The 'Sister Republics' of Asia

DURING the last few weeks, the governments of three Asian countries have been taken over by caudillos. In Pakistan representative institutions have been liquidated, while in Burma and Thailand they are scheduled to be reborn through a popular ballot. In the recent past, other military juntas have unseated the civilian politicians in other Asian countries. This trend should not find us unprepared, since it has been going on south of the Rio Grande for well over a century. The Pakistani and Thai generals are not the first ones to acquire power on the strength of armaments provided by the United States.

In these Asian countries, as so often in our sister republics, bureaucrats in uniform have established supremacy over the whole bureaucratic apparatus. It doesn't make much difference whether this takes place in a country called uncommitted or in one we are committed to assist. They all belong to what is called the free world, at least to the extent that their independence, old or new, is threatened by international Communism.

Communism commits us to the assistance of nominal democracies in nominal nations all over the world. Whenever the government of any non-Communist nation is taken over by those of its employees who happen to possess arms and are better fed—whenever this happens, this is disconcerting news for the free world.

THERE are other kinds of distressing news from more or less improbable nations to which we are nevertheless committed—evidence being the article that follows. The case of Laos is no isolated one, and the conclusion is invariably the same everywhere: Communism is the evil beneficiary of all the mistakes we make. Yet it must be added most emphatically that if we have produced, or sponsored, or failed to prevent messy situations in too many of the countries we have been trying to assist, even this messiness is better than withdrawal into Fortress America.

Actually, Communism is only one of the reasons for our involvement in Asian and African countries. When the old colonial empires became untenable and finally broke down, the major power in the West happened to be that of the United States—a nation utterly unwilling and unsuited to form an empire of its own. Yet the process of westernization that the colonial powers had started did not stop with the end of their empires. Rather, the new nations freed from the tutelage of a mother country were carried along, with sometimes reckless fury, by their urge to become westernized.

There was no exemption for new nations lacking the prerequisites that the western type of organization demands. More or less democratic institutions of a centralized or of a federal nature had to be brought into existence. These patterns of organization could be copied only from the West.

To satisfy the tumultuous yearning after industrialism, the economic structure in every new country was shaped according to western patterns of socialist or private or mixed ownership. For there are no alternatives to the western pattern of organization, aside from those cruel caricatures of the West—the runaway bureaucracy, the runaway technocracy of the Communist system.

It is distressing to see how military dictatorships are springing up in countries we have been assisting. It is disheartening to report on the too many messy situations that have been created abroad because of our inexperience or of our misguided good will or—sometimes—of plain dumbness. But most certainly to have done nothing, to have refused the responsibilities imposed on us by the disintegration of the western colonial empires—this would inevitably have led to our ruin. Too much is at stake, in terms of needed raw materials and of this frail, shaky peace we have, to allow us to watch the old empires sink and the new nations flounder.

Perhaps one day we will feel grateful to the many, many Americans—quiet, ugly, innocent, or bright—who have been messing around all over the world, at a time when our country could not afford being inactive or absent.

IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, furthermore, and now more than ever when the crisis in Asia is mounting, that while our country is the leading power of the West, the West is greater than our country. The wisdom of the West, too, is greater than ours, for we are only part of that whole. The West means the Alliance. In counteracting Communism, in preventing chaos, in helping new or renewed nations to follow the ways of the West, we need the closest possible co-operation with our allies, and particularly with those among them that have a long experience with international responsibility and with power.

Acting together with the other nations of the West, we can help many a new country to progress from nominal to real sovereignty. The lesson of our expensive and risky mistakes in Asia is that we are not powerful or experienced or wise enough to act alone.

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A Bulwark Built on Sand

HAYNES MILLER

THE DECISION to build up the strategically located kingdom of Laos as "a bulwark against Communism" in Southeast Asia was made in Washington three and a half years ago. Since then we have given more than $135 million to that landlocked country, the least developed of the three kingdoms that used to make up French Indo-China. What have we accomplished?

As an employee of the International Cooperation Administration in 1956 and 1957—my bureaucratic title was "end-use investigator"—I had a chance to observe some of the results of our Laotian policy at first hand. New evidence presented in recent Congressional hearings has confirmed my own findings. As I see it, the record to date is this:

¶ More than five-sixths of the money we have spent has gone to support an army that is almost entirely unsuited to the sort of fighting it might be called upon to do, whose very size we can estimate only with a forty per cent margin of error, and whose morale is understandably low.

¶ In order to pay, feed, and equip this army, we have flooded a primitive country with money and goods it could not possibly absorb and thereby created a situation in which corruption and fraudulent currency exchanges have flourished openly.

¶ Far from building up Laos as a bulwark against Communism, our policy may actually have served to strengthen the Communist position there. Campaigning against the corruption of the pro-western candidates in last May's elections, the political party that represents the Communist Pathet Lao group and its allies won a majority of the seats that they contested.

These same points have been made by a wide variety of Laotian leaders. Viceroy Tiao Phetsarath is a controversial figure in Laotian politics, but few would contest his indictment of American policy. In an interview published last year in *Lao-Presse*, he said:

"Our greatest danger of Communist subversion arises from the bad use of foreign aid we receive. . . . It enriches a minority outrageously while the mass of the population remains as poor as ever. . . . Laos maintains an army of 30,000 men, including the police force. This army costs us dearly. It takes men from agriculture and industry. And it could not possibly defend the country from foreign invasion."

Serving Two Masters

When the Geneva Agreements ended the war in Indo-China back in 1954, some eight thousand Pathet Lao guerrillas refused to participate in free elections and continued military operations against the government in the northeastern provinces adjoining Chinese and Vietminh territory. The French were in no position to continue supporting the native militia they had created, although according to the Geneva Agreements they are the only foreign power allowed to train it. At this point the United States stepped in. We undertook to help transform the militia into a permanent force and to assume the entire financial burden.

Relying for its training on one foreign power but dependent on the financial assistance of a second foreign power with which it has little or no direct communication, the Royal Laotian Army is not fully responsible to either. Its total strength is officially reported to be 25,000 men, and 25,000 salaries are in fact paid out. But observers whose sources of information I have reason to respect have estimated that it may number no more than 15,000.

An official of the General Accounting Office told the House Subcommittee on Appropriations last spring: "The question as to the actual strength of the army has been raised for the last two or three years. Nobody seemed to know exactly how many soldiers there were—there was

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no way of verifying it." The same official also testified: "There is no way . . . to find out what the actual cost of the army is, how much difference there is between the actual cost and what we pay. We do not know." It sometimes seems that the one thing we know for sure about the Laotian Army is that it is the only national defense force except our own whose budget is entirely underwritten by U.S. taxpayers.

Many of the French troops and officers who train the army speak Laotian. But since they have no control over the purse strings, they have little power over the basic concept and organization of the Laotian Army; that is the business of the thirty-odd men who represented the Pentagon while I was in Laos and who functioned under the sonorous title of Program Evaluation Office.

Their job is to plan, inspect, and control expenditures made under the Laotian military budget, and to evaluate the work of the French training mission. But during my tour of duty I found only one or two who spoke French and none who spoke Laotian. To make matters worse, many of the Americans have adopted an openly scornful attitude toward the French, so that the Laotians are able to do pretty much as they please with money, equipment, and discipline.

IN CONVERTING the Laotian militia into a permanent army, the United States paid little heed to the bitter lessons taught by the French defeat. French officers who fought in Indo-China have told me that the major reason for that defeat, aside from political infiltration, was the inability of their motorized forces to get off the roads and fight in the jungles. Yet the Laotian Army is still largely a motorized force, although there are less than a thousand miles of roadway over which it can move in trucks, even in four-wheel drive. And there is no all-weather road system whatsoever.

Since mountains and jungles prohibit cross-country movement by a motorized force, only a guerrilla force could put up an effective resistance. Laos has no industry, railroads, or communication centers. Its less than two million people, split up into forty different racial and linguistic tribes, are scattered over an area roughly equal to that of Georgia and South Carolina (90,000 square miles). Each of the primitive villages is self-sufficient, in war as in peace, and should the capital city of Vientiane again be occupied as it was by the Japanese, the Laotians might be expected to hold on as they did then.

But the Laotian Army is poorly adapted for guerrilla fighting, which could best be carried on by small commando units made up of tribesmen familiar with the region in which they were to fight. Unfortunately, by choosing almost all the officers for its army from the aristocratic families of the Lao tribe, the Laotian government has antagonized the lesser tribes, which the French considered the best fighters. The men of those tribes often leave the army with their weapons, return to their villages, and simply defy the government to do anything about it.

Most of the experience the Laotian Army has had in guerrilla fighting was picked up during the operations conducted by some of its units against the Pathet Lao forces. But although the Pathet Lao finally laid down its arms in November, 1957, the agreement was the result of political compromise rather than military success. It was reached only at the price of recognizing the Pathet Lao and its allies as a legal political party, the Neo Lao Hak Xai, and giving it representation in the cabinet. (After a political crisis in August, this representation was withdrawn.)

As a further result of the agreement, two battalions of Communist Pathet Lao fighters were incorporated into the Royal Laotian Army, which Walter Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, has called "the principal bulwark of Laos against Communism."

A U.S. Defense Department official testified before a Congressional hearing last June that the Laotian Army had two functions. One was to "provide initial resistance in the event that any attack be made from the north or northeast." And yet while I was in Laos I did not meet one French or Laotian officer who expected the army to make any organized resistance at all if either the Chinese or the Vietminh should intervene in force. Many Laotians said frankly they didn't expect that any western troops could or would come to their rescue and that they themselves would not wait to see what happened but would take off their uniforms and return to their villages.

The army's second function, according to the Defense Department official, was to "assure internal security." This problem, however, has changed substantially with the emergence of the Pathet Lao as a legal political party and the incorporation of two former Pathet Lao battalions into the army itself.

Since the army is just about as poorly equipped to deal with subversion as it is to wage guerrilla warfare, the United States has seen fit to expand the native gendarmery, originally numbering only a few hundred, into a well-armed force of four thousand men. Roughly eighty per cent of the cost of this project, which is planned and directed by a staff of U.S. police experts, has been paid for out of ICA technical-assistance funds. I was able to learn enough to reach a number of disturbing conclusions about the new Laotian police force: The American experts training it did not know how many men were actually on the force, where they were stationed, or what equipment they had; many native police officers were collecting pay for men who were supposed to be under their command but who actually existed only on paper; much of the equipment we supplied, including ammunition, clothing, and gaso-

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line, was being sold by members of the police force on the civilian market.

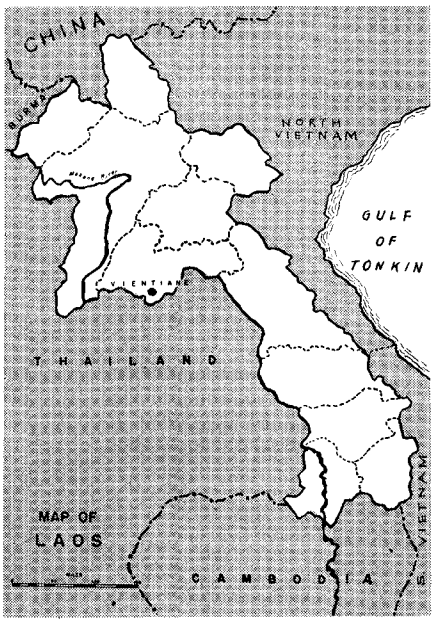
Creating Kip

Such are the armed forces that form our "bulwark against Communism" in Laos. Now let us take a look at the economic consequences of the decision that was made in Washington three and a half years ago. Having agreed to pay for this remarkable army, we had to find a way of quickly converting the dollars appropriated for it into Laotian currency (kip). After negotiations between the governments in Washington and Vientiane, it was agreed that the Laotian treasury would print enough new kip to pay the army, build its barracks, and buy its food, and that for every thirty-five kip printed the United States would deposit one dollar to the Laotian treasury's accounts in American banks. This was the rate of exchange that prevailed in French Indo-China before the Geneva Agreements of 1954.

To sop up the vast amount of new kip printed to support the Laotian Army, we underwrote a large-scale import program. Under this arrangement a Laotian importer would pay thirty-five kip to the Laotian treasury for every dollar's worth of goods he was licensed to import, and the exporter would then be paid in dollars outside Laos.

To carry out this plan, ICA's administrators made use of two fiscal devices: direct cash grants, which have comprised the great bulk of our dollar aid to Laos, and procurement authorizations. Under the P.A. plan, our usual procedure in other aid programs, Washington issues the licenses and controls all details of the transactions down to the last bill of lading. But the P.A. system was too slow a method in view of the magnitude of our commitments in Laos. To speed up the process, cash-grant dollars have been deposited in bulk for conversion into kip as they were needed to meet military payrolls. Unlike the P.A. funds, cash-grant dollars have been under the primary control of the Laotian government.

Under neither system have the items approved by ICA for importation or the dollar quotas assigned them borne much relation to the needs or purchasing habits of the Laotian people. For most of the entrepreneurs involved, the transactions have been nothing more than a way of converting kip into dollars at an extremely profitable rate of exchange; it is not to be assumed that



any article actually has been imported into Laos in the quantity approved. Most "importers" have chosen items that eventually could be sold in Thailand if they had to be brought into Laos at all. False import-export documents have been easy to obtain—especially in Thailand.

There has been a fairy-tale implausibility about much of the business carried on. In 1955 and 1956, licenses were issued for the importation of more than $4.5 million worth of textiles—despite the fact that Laotians spin and weave what they need in every hut of every village. During the same period, about $1.3 million worth of automobiles were ostensibly imported into a country where even the army's four-wheel-drive vehicles are unusable most of the year.

IN SUPPORT of such dubious transactions as these, we have been pouring an average of $45 million worth of kip per year into Laos, although before American aid began in 1955 all sales of consumer goods for currency, both wholesale and retail, were estimated to be no more than $4 million a year (at thirty-five kip to the dollar). It is hardly surprising then that within six months of the start of our program, kip were selling on the black market at fifty-seven to the dollar, and in the spring of 1957 they reached a low of 120 to the dollar. The lower the kip has fallen, the higher has been the profit for "importers" who have had the privilege of buying dollars at the official rate. This rate has recently been set at eighty kip to a dollar, but that is still less than the unofficial rate.

The Blessings of Fraud

Two factors have combined to prevent inflation from developing even faster than it has. First, almost all trading among the Laotian people is carried on by barter. (The population of Vientiane has more than tripled since our aid program began in 1955, but besides the hundreds of Chinese traders who have poured into the city and the score or more of French and European firms, I found only three Laotian businessmen.) Very few Laotians depend on wages or currency transactions, and so the fact that money doesn't buy as much as it used to simply doesn't affect them. There are none of the wage demands and similar economic pressures that would tend to accelerate the inflationary spiral in western countries.

Second, the importer must pay the Laotian treasury not only the official value of the dollars he is licensed to use but also heavy import duties and taxes. Thus the Laotian treasury has been retiring considerably more than thirty-five kip for each dollar's worth of goods "imported." Furthermore, since these duties and taxes must be paid whether the goods actually arrive in Laos or not, the fictitious and fraudulent "importations" which have been all too typical under our import program have served at least one useful purpose in Laos by taking kip out of circulation and returning them to the treasury. The country could not possibly have absorbed an equivalent amount of real goods.

Paper Piracy

The ease with which these paper transactions can be carried out has produced a new class of piratical businessmen in Laos. I first encountered some of them soon after

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I arrived in Laos when I attended the meetings of the Laotian Import-Export Board.

The board, which was composed of the ICA procurement officer and several Laotian officials, passed on all import applications at its weekly meetings. At one of the first meetings I attended, the board was considering applications for licenses to import large shipments of glutinous rice from Bangkok—a region, incidentally, in which that type of rice is not grown. The Laotian chief of customs was opposed to permitting any rice imports at all. He pointed out that Laos was growing all the rice it needed. Despite his objection, and despite the fact that the prices quoted in the applications were far in excess of the normal rates, the licenses were approved with the concurrence of the ICA official.

Presumably one of the reasons for the exorbitant prices quoted was the remarkable circumstance that the applications included costs for shipping the rice from the Thai Issarn region, just across the river from Laos, all the way down to Bangkok and then back across those same regions of Thailand into Laos. If these import transactions had actually been carried out, the shipping costs alone would have exceeded the value of the rice delivered in Laos.

I conducted an inquiry into all rice importations purportedly effected during 1956 and in the course of my investigations discovered a number of rather disturbing facts:

¶ Even though Laos was producing more than enough rice for its own needs, $3.3 million had been spent during 1956 to "import" 24,000 tones of glutinous rice.

¶ The value of this rice both in Thailand and Laos during this period was not $133 a ton—the price approved by ICA and the Laotian Import-Export Board—but actually varied around $45 a ton.

¶ At least $2 million of the $3.3 million spent for rice in 1956 represented a fraudulent dollar profit to be divided between the "importers" and their accomplices, including the supposed exporters.

¶ I could find no proof, except in one case involving only one hundred tons, that any rice at all had actually been imported into Laos during 1956.

I WENT TO BANGKOK to question the Thai exporters, among whom were the directors of the Varivarn Company. Its Chinese president told me in the presence of the directors that it had given its letterhead to a Laotian, Bouachan Intavong, who then filled out the necessary documents, including an exporter's offer and price quotations, to simulate the importation of some 1,400 tons of rice that he was supposed to supply to the Royal Laotian Army.

In another transaction, Intavong, whose powerful friends included at least one high official of the Import-Export Board, obtained a license to import twenty "German-made" generators—not from Germany but from Thailand. On arrival, the generators turned out to be American surplus material.

They had originally been sold to the U.S. Army in 1943 or 1944 for an average of $745 each, or a total cost of $14,900. They were imported into Laos under an import license on which the United States paid $162,000 in Bangkok. Since I had made an inspection and a report of the purchase before Washington had paid the exporter, I requested that payment be stopped. No action was taken, however, and Intavong made another handsome profit.

Intavong's deals were typical. In the chaotic business climate our aid program created in Laos, almost every transaction has been manipulated to the advantage of the dubious "businessmen"—most of them Chinese and Thais—who have come flocking in to share in the spoils. According to the General Accounting Office in Washington, P.A.s for Laos totaling $24.3 million were issued during the first two years of the program, but only $9.8 million worth of goods were recorded as ever having arrived in Laos. The comparable figures for cash-grant dollars, which represent roughly seventy per cent of our total dollar aid, would undoubtedly show a far greater discrepancy.

The Famous American Know-how

Compared with the sprawling complexities of the military-support program, our technical-assistance projects in Laos seem relatively insignificant. Budgeted at a mere $6 million a year, such development aid involves very little currency exchange and thus creates few opportunities for broad-scale currency fraud. Almost all the costs have been paid in dollars, and the program is run by economic experts selected by the United States government. And yet those projects that are not shot through with fraud are usually reduced to ineffectuality by what we may perhaps most charitably call negligence.

A case in point was the ICA project to supply Vientiane with enough power to run its electric system, which was hopelessly inadequate for the new lamps, radios, and electrical appliances we had imported. The project, developed exclusively by Americans, was to cost $483,700. More than three months after the U.S. ambassador had officially dedicated America's gift of an electric plant to the Laotian people, it was discovered that $318,000 worth of generators and other electrical equipment had simply been left standing

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in an open shed. No transformers and no high-tension or other electrical wiring had been ordered, and no plans had been made for supplying the Diesel engines with fuel, although the new plant would consume some three thousand drums of fuel a month. This represented approximately three-quarters of the amount of fuel that had been required for all other Laotian needs in the recent past.

Since there are no railroads in Laos and no such thing as a gasoline truck, all fuel has to be transported in barrels, and the limited transportation facilities had never been able to keep up even with past fuel demands. For that and several other reasons, the French engineer in charge of the electrical station at Vientiane did not expect the American plant to function even after transformers, high-tension lines, and wiring had been ordered and installed.

Road to Fortune

But perhaps the most shocking of all the ICA's technical-assistance projects in Laos was its road-building program. It revealed ample evidence of what a recent Government Operations subcommittee report has called a "pattern" of job hopping from ICA payrolls to those of private firms operating in the area, as well as a striking "community of interest" that tends to develop between mission directors and "their" contractors.

The road-construction project was launched in 1955 when ICA employed Transportation Consultants Inc., of Washington, D.C., to design a basic road pattern for Laos. Road equipment costing $1,760,000 was imported from the United States, and three American construction companies were hired at a cost of about $1 million to get the work under way. But a fourth company soon edged its way into the project and before long took over almost the whole operation.

This was the Universal Construction Company, Ltd., of Bangkok, which was organized in 1956 by two Americans, Willis Bird and G. A. Peabody. Peabody had been introduced to Laotian construction work while doing a job for the embassy in 1955-1956. Within a year after its organization, Universal had acquired half a dozen contracts with ICA and had begun a series of even more fruitful contracts with the Laotian government, whose officials say they met Peabody through ICA's public-works director in Laos, Edwin McNamara. At that time, one pickup truck represented the company's entire construction equipment and its staff consisted of one young American engineer and some untrained Okinawan workers.

UNIVERSAL, whose popularity with ICA continued to grow, received all the heavy road-building equipment and most of the jeeps and personnel vehicles that had been paid for by American aid; it also acquired possession and control of almost all the heavy equipment supplied under the Colombo Plan. Within six months the damage to all this equipment, caused by Universal's untrained operators, was estimated at forty per cent.

Peabody was paid $75,000 under two contracts to receive, service, and catalogue the road-building equipment and to do some work on a short stretch of road outside Vientiane. In due course ICA's public-works division certified that Universal had

done the work in accordance with its contracts, and Peabody was paid in full.

In my investigation I found that Peabody had not in fact fulfilled either contract. Both contracts, insofar as they were properly executed at all, had been carried out by another American firm and by the Laotian government, and both had already been paid for—the first by ICA's Washington office, the second out of the Laotian government's own budget.

In May, 1957, despite this rather spotty record of accomplishment, Peabody got a contract to construct a ferry ramp and customs compound in Laos at an exorbitant figure. The contract is alleged to have been negotiated with an employee of Transportation Consultants, which was making the highway survey for the mission public-works officer, Mr. McNamara. Shortly after the contract had been negotiated, the T.C.I. man left that firm and went to work for Peabody. About a year after that, McNamara left the ICA and went to work for Transportation Consultants—not, however, before recommending that ICA give Peabody's firm a major bridge-building contract that he had just worked out or before putting Peabody in line to receive further road-building contracts from the Laotian government. One such contract gave Peabody approximately $1,400 per head per month for his forty-odd Okinawans, who are normally paid one-tenth of that amount when they know their job well.

After my inspection of these and other contracts that the Universal Construction Company had obtained and of its performance under them, I concluded that the company had not executed any single contract; that none of its contracts contained adequate specifications; that the contract quotations were exorbitant; that the contractor did not have personnel adequate either in number or training to complete any of its contracts; and that ICA personnel appeared to be interested in some of the contracts.

I had of course begun to report my findings to ICA, but I was soon ordered to drop my investigation of the possibly fraudulent aspects of Universal's activities and to make no examinations of its books. This was precisely what Peabody had told me would happen when I first asked permission to examine his records—and was refused.

I was not alone in my assessment of ICA's road-building project. The U.N. economic adviser to the Laotian Ministry of Finance and the Colombo Plan investigator had in-

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dependently come to the conclusion that there was ample reason to suspect fraud.

Worse Than Waste

ICA has made various efforts to eliminate or at least to reduce the widespread fraud our military-aid program brought into Laos. None of these attempts at reform met with remarkable success while I was there. Certainly my own small efforts met with total failure. The Laotian chief of customs and I recommended a series of measures that would have corrected some of the grosser abuses of the import program. At one point the minister of finance, S. E. Leuam, seemed willing to inaugurate some of the controls recommended, provided ICA would agree. But the mission chief hesitated to take any action that would increase friction or misunderstanding between ICA and the Laotian government, and the discussions ended without any agreement being reached. Further efforts ended in similar failure for similar reasons. "If a fish escapes through a hole in your net," Mr. Leuam told me philosophically, "it is not the fish's fault."

One of the gaping holes has now been patched up a little. Last month, after repeated efforts and failures, Washington obtained from the Laotian government an agreement to devalue the kip from thirty-five to eighty to the dollar. The ICA has also set up a new system of policing import licenses. It remains to be seen how effective these measures will be. But so far as I can see, they leave untouched the central problem: the role and character of the Laotion Army and the expanded police force, which will continue to require large subventions in the form of essentially uncontrolled cash-grant dollars.

INSTEAD of creating a situation of military strength as a "bulwark against Communism," our policy has made Laos into what a recent report of the General Accounting Office has called "a financial dependency" of the United States. It would be bad enough if the money had been merely wasted. The record to date, however, shows that our Laotian policy has demoralized our friends and strengthened our enemies.

AT HOME & ABROAD

The New Shape Of British Politics

ALASTAIR BUCHAN

LONDON

SIX MONTHS AGO you would have found an almost unanimous opinion in London among the political pundits of the Right or of the Left that the next prime minister of Britain was likely to be Hugh Gaitskell, the leader of the Labour Party. Today, with a general election six—or at most only eighteen—months away, one would find most of these same experts agreed that Labour is almost certain to lose the next election. What happened?

Reading the signs of last winter and spring, one had every reason to assume that the Conservatives were on their way out, that the famous political pendulum was now going to swing according to schedule. Throughout 1957 the voting in by-elections had shown a steady trend against the Tories. The personal popularity of Harold Macmillan, a relatively unknown figure when he succeeded Eden in January, 1957, had declined steadily throughout the year. The nearly disastrous run on sterling in the fall of last year was reversed only by a very high bank rate of seven per cent, which in turn had required severe restrictions on investment at home. There was fear that the American recession might spread to these shores, and that a Conservative government—wedded to keeping sterling as an international currency and averse to direct controls—would prove unable to stop it. Wage and price inflation continued drearily. With the wounds of Suez still unhealed, the Tories looked like a divided party, an impression confirmed when Peter Thorneycroft, the powerful young chancellor of the exchequer, resigned last January in protest at his colleagues' failure to support him in his drastic efforts to keep prices down.

IN A BY-ELECTION last February at Rochdale in Lancashire, the Conservative share of the vote fell by the enormous figure of thirty-two per cent, in a three-cornered contest

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where a fluent and well-known broadcaster, Ludovic Kennedy, standing as a Liberal, drove the Tory to the bottom of the poll. At Torrington in Devonshire, in March, a Liberal won a by-election for the first time in nearly thirty years, and the Tory vote again fell by twenty-seven per cent. In the municipal and local elections of the spring, the Conservative gains of 1955 were entirely wiped out. The Gallup Poll told the same story: Gaitskell had a decisive edge over Macmillan in personal popularity, and in April, of those asked about their voting intentions, only 32.5 per cent said that they would vote Tory, while 45.5 per cent chose Labour.

The figures seemed to tell the familiar story of a government outrunning its mandate, and the principal question was not whether the Tories would lose but how soon before the life of the present Parliament expired in the spring of 1960 they would submit themselves to the verdict of the people. Around the Labour luncheon tables, the argument turned from how to win power to what to do with it; Tory ministers began to think longingly of good company directorships, of farming and hunting and holidays. Macmillan, it was acknowledged, was too remote and impersonal to stem the tide; Selwyn Lloyd at the Foreign Office was a cipher; Derick Heathcoat-Amory, the new chancellor, was a shy bachelor with a following that extended no further than Whitehall; Party Chairman Lord Hailsham, with his histrionic and pugnacious tactics, was if anything a liability.

A Change in the Weather

But as a cold spring gave way to one of the wettest summers in the long English memory of wet summers, the fortunes of the Tories rose in astonishing counterpoint. The effect of stringent fiscal policies during the winter—coupled with the decline in world raw-material prices and consequently in British import costs—began to produce a dramatic rise in the reserves of gold and dollars. As a result, for the first time since the early 1950's the government can now seriously contemplate making the pound convertible. The rate of wage inflation steadied from an annual increase of ten per cent over each of the past ten years to a mere 4.5 per cent. By the end of the summer the ordinary voter could feel, as he saw the cost-of-living index flutter and even drop a point, that the government had—for the first time in several years—a real grip on the economy.

As for the unions, unemployment had not risen dramatically enough (it increased from less than 300,000 to about 420,000 during the first nine months of the year, bringing

Gaitskell

the figure to exactly two per cent of the labor force) to give them a real issue. Nor could they deny that the Tory preference for fiscal over direct controls had been effective both in stabilizing costs and restoring confidence in the pound. In the Gallup poll, the percentage of those who said they would vote Conservative in a general election began to creep steadily up, until by mid-September the party had regained the lead for the first time since the end of 1955. The latest figures read: Conservative, 38.5 per cent; Labour, 35 per cent; Liberal, 10 per cent; "don't know," 16.5 per cent.

But this remarkable Conservative recovery is only partly the consequence of the government's economic achievements. It is also a tribute to the personality of Harold Macmillan. A year ago Macmillan seemed to have nearly everything against him: neither the friendliness of an Eisenhower nor the stature of a de Gaulle, Edwardian tastes and aristocratic connections, a reputation as a hard man on colleagues and subordinates. But he has nevertheless caught the public imagination. He has been a great success on TV, where Gaitskell has not; he has even acquired something of the earthiness of Churchill, as Eden never could. He has appeared relaxed at moments of domestic and international crisis. He has handled the House of Commons skillfully. Above all, he has handled the major international issues of the last nine months—the Summit, bomb tests, Lebanon, and Quemoy—with real brilliance, making it clear to Khrushchev, with whom he has been very sharp, that Britain cannot be detached from the American alliance, while preserving, for his own public, the echo of a wisdom superior to Dulles's.

The Labour Party's experts, watching Gaitskell's star wane and Macmillan's rise during the last six months, have at least the satisfaction of knowing that their adversary is undoubtedly the cleverest politician to have emerged at Westminster in a quarter of a century or more.

But the conjunction of a clever politician and a run of luck are not a new phenomenon in any country. What the last few months have revealed above all is the political sickness of the Left. When things are going badly for a Tory government in the economic field, as they were last winter, then Labour can rely on a large protest vote. But the evidence of recent years is that when the British economy is on an even keel—and one must remember that the ordinary voter does not concern himself with fundamental problems of industrial growth or stagnation—Labour's natural strength is likely to be no more than forty or forty-five per cent of the electorate. The Tories in Britain are in fact like the Democrats in the United States—the natural majority party can be unseated only by an unusual combination of circumstances.

The Labour Party's problem has always been that since the British working class is fundamentally very

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conservative in outlook on non-economic questions, it must rely for a large part of its support on middle-class votes. But the striking fact of the last two years, as revealed both in polls and by-election figures, has been that a large part of the middle-class protest vote against Suez, against inflation, against the British H-bomb, has not gone to Labour but to the reviving Liberal Party. The by-elections at Gloucester and Ipswich last year, at Rochdale and Torrington this year, where in each case the Liberal candidate did far better than was predicted, are signs that neither of the major parties can ignore.

The British Liberal Party is the relic of a proud organization that ruled Britain on and off for three-quarters of a century, and the name still evokes ancestral memories in the voter's subconscious. It has six members of Parliament, two assets, several insuperable drawbacks, and an unpredictable future. One asset is that, having very little to lose and depending almost entirely on middle-class support, it can adopt a more radical line on both foreign and domestic issues than the Labour Party, which can normally only count on about sixty per cent of the working-class vote and must therefore be very cautious on any question that affects the deep chauvinism or traditional mores of a working class that, by and large, approved of Suez, of making a British H-bomb, of capital punishment—the very things of which middle-class radicals disapprove. Thus the Liberals have been able to take a more trenchant line than Labour on Britain's attempt to develop an independent nuclear deterrent and on several domestic issues as well.

The other asset is a first class leader in Jo Grimond, a tall, handsome, and eloquent man of forty-five who manages to combine the intellectual quality of Gaitskell with something of the wit and buoyancy of Macmillan. He fulfills a strong English yearning for the leadership of the intellectual aristocrat, though he is apt to wonder whether it is the kiss of fortune or of political death to be so often called "the Adlai Stevenson of British politics."

But whatever his fortunes—and with his considerable administrative ability and ambition, few could blame him for accepting office in a coalition with one or the other of his adversaries—he has already done a good deal to raise the level of English political debate. It was highly significant of the temper of the country that when he recently attacked both the major parties for using titles, offices, and other forms of privilege to strengthen their political

Lloyd

hold while in office, he was publicly reproved by Earl Attlee but warmly commended by the left-wing mass-circulation *Daily Mirror* for having spoken up on an issue that the Labour Party should have made its own. When he says that Britain has not one but two conservative parties, he finds a responsive echo across the land.

ONE LIBERAL DRAWBACK can also be laid at Grimond's doorstep. The party gives the impression of being governed by a family compact, since Grimond is the son-in-law of the formidable Lady Violet Bonham Carter, the daughter of Herbert Asquith, the last leader of a united Liberal Party; while her son, Mark Bonham Carter, the victor of Torrington, is the most effective member of his tiny band of supporters in the House.

This little group might grow to a dozen, perhaps to twenty-five, in the next election, and conceivably hold the balance of power between Labour and Conservative. It might as easily dwindle to two and thence to nothing. For though there are probably upward of three million voters who would like to vote Liberal, and though the percentage of those who have told the Gallup Poll this year that they would vote Liberal in a general election has risen as high as fifteen per cent, they are thinly spread and there is an ingrained dislike of a "wasted vote" that always tends to favor the candidates of the two parties which could actually form a government. Moreover, although one can find any number of middle-class Socialists, in Parliament and out, who, rebelling against their party's stodgy trade-unionism, mutter that if they were young now they would be Liberals, there have been no important defections.

Finally, the Liberal Party's annual conference this year was an utter shambles, chaired by an elderly lawyer who apparently could neither speak nor hear, who accepted diametrically opposed resolutions, and who unwittingly helped publicize the party's inner weakness. The conference attempted an impossible fusion between the nostalgic pensioners of the battles for free trade and Irish home rule half a century ago and earnest young men and women who are trying to grapple with Cyprus and the ICBM.

Affluence and Irrelevance

But the fact that Britain's "Liberal revival" has proved for the moment to be a dubious proposition solves none of the Labour Party's problems. Its own party conference this year displayed, it is true, fewer signs of strain than those of recent years. There was no question this time that Gaitskell was the leader; indeed, the fervor with which the delegates cheered and clapped seemed to reflect not so much response to what he said as a passionate longing for strong leadership. But Gaitskell's success is merely another way of describing the shrinkage of Aneurin

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Bevan, who has somehow been bypassed by time and events. Foreign affairs, on which he is the party's spokesman, do not really interest him; and with his heart set on an outdated Socialist program of extensive nationalization that seems increasingly irrelevant in a managerial society, his eloquence and his gifts may have little chance of use. He faces the possibility of going down to posterity chiefly as a man of opposition, a Churchill without a 1940.

LABOUR'S dilemma will be very difficult to resolve. Britain today is an affluent society—an affluence in which all classes share in varying measure. The British industrial worker owns nothing like the cars, the housing, or the gadgets of his American counterpart. The professional man still pays taxes which an American lawyer or businessman would consider crushing (though he is free to finance his Bentley and his Mediterranean holiday from untaxed capital gains). But having lived exactly half of the last decade in each country, I think it fair to say that, taking life in the two countries as a whole, the Britain of 1958 is closer in its material standard of living to the United States of 1958 than to the Britain of 1948.

One can judge this by a look at the figures or by a look out of one's window. In the past ten years, according to the official statistics, expenditure on various forms of non-essentials—drinking, smoking, holidays, gadgets, motoring—has increased by thirty-two per cent: expenditure on motoring has exactly quadrupled; on TV and electrical gadgets it has doubled. In my own neighborhood, where I have lived on and off since childhood, the wives from the local U.S. Strategic Air Command Base, with their big cars, full shopping bags, plaid slacks, and sleek pony tails, simply look a little more chic and adept than the baker's and the builder's wife, where only a few years ago they would have stood out like visitors from Mars. The TV screen, to which the average English family is now even more rigidly glued than the American family is, has opened a new horizon of pleasure. A prosperous worker and his family may well take their holiday in Spain or France. Compared to the United States or West Germany or even France, the foundations of this affluence are shaky enough, with too slow a rate of industrial growth and productivity and too much vulnerability to external conditions. But this worries only the economist or the civil servant; it does not trouble the vast majority of voters in a hedonistic society that would have seemed inconceivable (and outrageous) to Sir Stafford Cripps.

The sociologists are still arguing what this rise in economic standards has done to political and social values—whether it is producing a bourgeois working class as in Germany or the United States, or

Macmillan

whether the older class loyalties are unaffected. It is too early yet to be dogmatic: four generations of bad housing, bad working conditions, and insufficient social services have left a strong sense of solidarity in the English working class—especially in the older industries and bigger towns—which it would take much more than one decade of prosperity to affect. But at the edges, there is a growing proportion of the electorate—how large no one can say—in the light industries, in the skilled trades, among the many self-employed, or in the new service industries, whose sense of class solidarity is breaking down. Their parents were working-class and proud to be so, were deeply stirred by the socialist vision of an egalitarian society. What their children want, without knowing how to express it, is not a socialist egalitarian society, but a more mobile, perhaps more liberal one, with a more democratic social structure and the kind of social recognition for brains and energy that they discern in America, in Canada, or in Australia.

The alternatives of a socialist economy (with more and more nationalized industries) or of a Tory society (reflecting not industrial but seignorial England) both have a diminishing appeal—the "young angries" are not a purely literary phenomenon. The prize in English politics will go in the long run to the party that can first determine the size and outline of this new "classless" vote and then give expression to its aspirations.

The problem that this poses for the Labour Party is that it must find an alternative social philosophy to replace its traditional socialism. It must in fact become a liberal party, if it is to extend its appeal beyond the old working class and the more old-fashioned kind of high-minded middle-class radical. A doctrine it must have, for if it appeals to the electorate merely as a pragmatic alternative to the Conservatives, as a good manager of the economic and social status quo, it is likely, in the immediate future at any rate, to be doomed to defeat.

Wanted: a New Gladstone

Man for man, the Tory leaders appear to be much abler managers than their Labour counterparts. Macmillan has a greater appeal than Gaitskell. True, Aneurin Bevan has greater stature and political size than Selwyn Lloyd, but his pronouncements on foreign policy are wooly and formless. Derick Heathcoat-Amory, the present chancellor, may be a less able economist than the "shadow" Chancellor Harold Wilson, but he inspires far more confidence; and Ian Macleod, the Tory minister of labour, and Alan Lennox-Boyd at the colonial office have greater drive than their Labour

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"shadows," whose names one has difficulty in remembering. The Conservatives in general have a larger reservoir of competent men in their forties and fifties than Labour has at present. Moreover, on purely bread-and-butter questions—pensions, homeownership, aid for farmers, and the like—the Tories have shown themselves able to steal Labour's ideas and present them more attractively.

It will not be at all easy for Labour to become a liberal party. It was born in protest at the inadequacy of the Liberal answer to the industrial problems of the earlier part of this century, and its tradition has always been to concentrate on the purely economic aspect of every social question. Moreover, the old militant sense of class warfare is still strong enough to split the party whenever its leadership produces a liberal program—as happened this year with its new education policy, which recognized the value of the great "public" schools and the right of the middle class to educate their children as they pleased. And if it heeds its working-class militants too much, it faces a greater danger—that politics in Britain will go the way of France, that the Left may split into two parties, of middle-class liberals and working-class socialists, opening the way to a long rule by the Right.

Whatever happens in the immediate future to Labour, Conservatives, or Liberals, there seems little doubt that British politics, responding to the immense changes in the fortunes of the country and of its individual voters, are likely to go through a period of considerable confusion. It has happened before, in the mid-Victorian years after the great upheaval of political and economic reform in the 1830's and 1840's. One is tempted to prophesy that the present confusion will resolve itself only when a new Gladstone emerges from the ranks of Labour or the Liberals, a man of sufficiently broad sympathy and political skill to bridge the widening gulf between the Socialist heritage and the Liberal aspiration, to define the true size of Great Britain in a changed world—neither too ambitious nor too parochial—and to lift British politics out of the rut in which it runs today.

Nixon for Nixon

DOUGLASS CATER

October 25

Fifteen minutes out of Washington the Vice-President comes aft, pushing aside the curtains that separate his private quarters from the reporters' section of the plane. He has changed into a blue and green tartan smoking jacket. Leaning over each reporter in turn to exchange a few words of greeting, Nixon radiates healthy good looks not usually caught by the television and still cameras. Close up the jowls are not quite so heavy, the brow not so beetled.

Nixon is pretty much his own press secretary. He writes the daily releases, usually no more than two or three pages in length, that substitute for more formal speech texts and simplify the reporter's job. He schedules his own press conferences and background stories with a shrewd eye to the A.M.'s and P.M.'s of the newspaper editions. He shows compassion for the wire-service man's gnawing need for an "overnight." Toward the weekend he usually manages to come up with a juicy little nugget that will serve for the Sunday "feature."

During the intermittent get-togethers, the Vice-President deals familiarly with press problems. "Keep asking me that question. I'll have some news on it later on today." Just before a televised press conference in Hartford he calls out, "You fellows shooting all three cameras? I'll try to play no favorites." Even talking to the general public, the Vice-President shows an unconscious tendency to fall into the lingo of the publicity boys. His speaking engagements are invariably referred to as "appearances." "This is the first time I've ever appeared in Burlington," he tells the Vermonters. Asked about Nelson Rockefeller's prospects, he responds magnanimously that "all of us current national figures will be helped by developing other national figures." Discussing strategy, he says that the Democrats "peaked" their campaign too early, while the Republicans started late.

Surely Nixon is one of the most skilled politicians of our time in adapting himself to the character and mood of his audience. Throughout a long day we watch with awe as he puts essentially the same speech through three totally different renditions. Outside the State Capitol in Hartford, the Vice-President holds a lunch-hour crowd, hungry and pressed for time, with the shrill attention-getting devices employed by the carnival barker. ("I'll rest my case on this. If you agree that the three propositions I am going to lay down represent your position . . .")

The Burlington High School auditorium is filled with the calm dignity of a Vermont town; there, Nixon's speech is quiet and dignified. The same evening he appears before a vast amphitheater of howling party faithful in the big city atmosphere of Providence, and all stops are pulled in a ripsnorting call to Republican militancy. (". . . And if I were Harry Truman I could use even better words to tell you what I think about it.")

Four days' itinerary covers eight states from Maryland to South Dakota. Not a motion appears wasted, not a half hour left idle, and no one on the staff seems pressed. Evidently the advance man has been thorough.

The ruthless scheduling goes beyond anything in this reporter's experience. Still, it is strange in a Congressional election year to see how little attention is given to the Republican candidates themselves. At two or three places in the Nixon itinerary they have been allowed to speak before he arrives. But mostly they are content to take hurried bows to the audience he has attracted and to let him speak in their behalf. Listening to Nixon day after day, reporters count the arguments that seem more appropriate to Nixon's ambitions in 1960 than to the congressman's in 1958. There is the reference to Vice-Presidential training: "I have sat in the high policy councils and I know our military

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strength." And to experience: "I have seen the hard face of Communism in fifty-five countries." And even the sly mention of increased maturity: "I was here many years ago—more years than I care to remember."

IT IS A CURIOUS paradox that the mass communications which Nixon has worked so hard to master present his greatest problem. His main trouble comes from the fact that other audiences than those he faces are listening. The modern reporter carries newfangled devices not much bulkier than his notebook with which he can record what the politician says. The New York *Times* correspondent assigned to Nixon has been instructed to use his Minifon on every occasion. There has been too much bickering in the past over what the Vice-President has said or has not said.

Reporters traveling with Nixon agree that he has moderated his attack on the Democrats during this final pre-election push—mainly by subtle shifts in his vocabulary. Earlier in the campaign he argued that an Acheson foreign policy meant war, an Eisenhower-Dulles policy meant peace. Now he simply says that a "firm" policy means peace and a "weak" policy means war.

Why, a reporter asks Nixon, is he devoting so much time to Quemoy and Matsu when everybody agrees that there isn't any political mileage in foreign policy? The Vice-President welcomes the question. "I have always believed that a campaign provides an opportunity to inform the American people of the nature of the danger we face. . . . The greatest danger is to think there is an easy way out—a way to avoid the sacrifices."

An hour later, the Vice-President repeats to his audience in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the peroration he has used in every speech along the way. "This administration got the United States out of one war. We have kept the country out of other wars. And not a single American soldier is fighting or dying anywhere in the world today." As usual, it gets a big hand. The Vice-President, weighing the realities of 1958 and 1960, has decided to employ neither the hard sell nor the soft sell. His is the campaign of the self sell.

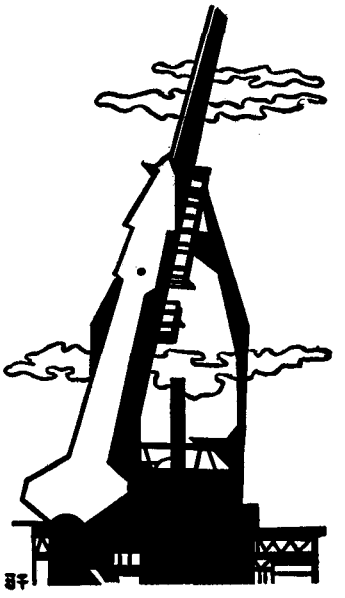
Of Sidewinders And Dead Ends

JOHN H. TROLL

A NEW AMERICAN WEAPON has made a dramatic debut in the Formosa Strait. This is Sidewinder, a small air-to-air missile that enabled Chinese Nationalist pilots in obsolete F-86 planes, outnumbered five to one, to down a considerable number of MIGs in a recent air engagement.

The reason for Sidewinder's deadly effectiveness is partly explained by its code name. A sidewinder is a small rattlesnake that seeks out its victim by sensing the heat, or, more precisely, the infrared radiation emanating from it. The Sidewinder missile, too, locates its victim by sensing the infrared radiation which is the inevitable accompaniment of all transformation of energy, whether it occurs in living beings or in operating machinery. Sidewinder's eye is a photocell that generates an electrical signal which not only tells of the presence of a target but also indicates the direction from which the target radiation has been received. This information, in turn, operates the missile's steering mechanism so that it follows its target until it makes contact.

But perhaps the most remarkable feature of Sidewinder is its cost. At about $1,000 a shot, it appears to be the cheapest guided aerial weapon in our arsenal. A competitive infrared missile, the GAR-2A Falcon, which does very much the same job, costs nine times as much.



This defense miracle was achieved by unmiraculous techniques. Sidewinder was developed at the Naval Ordnance Test Station (NOTS) in Inyokern, California, a community of creative and versatile scientists working for the government. The atmosphere at NOTS is such that it attracts and holds some of the best physicists, mathematicians, and small-missile experts in the country, largely because their creative abilities are given free rein. In the case of Sidewinder, they created first on paper and then tried in the laboratory the prototypes of the missile they wanted to build. Then they called in firms whose scientists seemed best qualified to handle further development work and production. Their selection included both large and small companies.

The work of these government and industrial groups was directed by Dr. William McLean, now technical director of NOTS. Sidewinder grew out of an image in Dr. McLean's mind—in contrast to most of our new weapons, which are the product of expert committees. It grew with an integrated personality of its own, not as a patchwork of brilliant expert performances.

ONE WOULD EXPECT that the approach that proved so successful with Sidewinder, and in earlier years with the Manhattan Project, would be standard operating procedure for our large-missile, space, and satellite programs. But surprisingly, the Sidewinder success story is an isolated one.

The approach which is taken now, and which I believe has caused these programs to lag despite vast increases in military and research appropria-

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tions, is based on a policy of getting the government out of its own defense business. This approach has debilitated all government research facilities, leaving research and development vital to our defense to be performed under contracts by private firms, under a system that leads to the selection of contractors on the basis of size and financial status rather than scientific capability. This in turn has brought about an "organization man" approach to research that destroys individual creativity in the scientist by leading to a sort of creeping collectivism more usually associated with the Soviet Union.

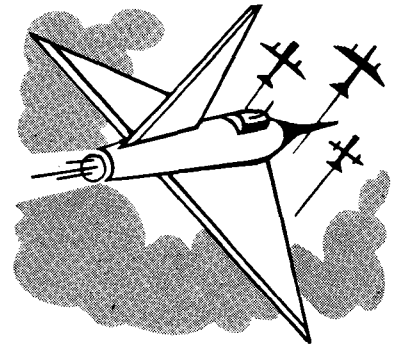
Of Cash and Kudos

During recent years there has been a steady decay of the U.S. civil service, in terms of both money and prestige. In most European countries, including the Soviet Union, the civil servant, particularly the scientific specialist, enjoys great prestige and monetary rewards. In Russia the scientist may receive as much as fifty times the rate of an unskilled laborer —as well as such fringe benefits as a chauffeur-driven car and a country house with servants. A government scientist in our country receives on the average no more than three times the U.S. minimum wage.

Aside from money, the prestige of the scientist serving our government has been seriously weakened. He is largely unknown to the public and sometimes even to his fellow scientists, because of severe and sometimes needless security restrictions that occlude his scope.

In a recent scientific meeting on the detection of certain types of electromagnetic radiation, for instance, original and significant contributions from scientists working at various government agencies were presented. But the audience was limited not merely to those scientists who were "cleared" but further to those who could "demonstrate a need to know." Moreover, the scientists could not publish their results in the unclassified scientific publications, only in modified form in the classified scientific literature. It is clear that such an artificial restriction on scientific communication, besides being inimical to research, removes one of a scientist's most important incentives: recognition by the scientific community.

Many scientists with creative ability have entered government service, but only a few idealists among them remain. Others have gone into industry or into the universities, where rewards, prestige, and creative opportunities are more attractive. Wright Field's great convoluted



wind tunnels, engine test stands, and elaborate laboratories lie silent most of the time, one example of the costly, well-equipped government research facilities that go to waste while the greater part of scientific and development work is done through contracts with industrial firms to which the government pays labor, material, overhead, and profit, and for which it frequently builds entire plant facilities.

THE PLANNING and supervision of these research contracts is the responsibility of a project engineer, one of the few potentially creative positions remaining for a scientist in government.

But the project engineer's task is a difficult one. He must select, sometimes in a few days, which of a number of technical proposals offers the best solution to a problem in a field in which his personal experience is often limited. Having selected a contractor, he must supervise and judge the progress of the work, usually by remote control, since budgets restrict his travel and telephone contacts. Although he must make vital decisions on how research is to proceed, he has little direct contact with the project, which he sees only as represented in monthly letters he receives. He has the responsibilities that go with performing active research, but his only tools are the papers he is shuffling.

It is not surprising that the most creative project engineers find little satisfaction in such a task. This makes for a severe scarcity of project engineers and a vast turnover.

Lunch Before Logarithms

The main burden of progress, therefore, rests on the shoulders of the scientists working for industrial contractors. This, perhaps, is where the responsibility should lie in a country that prides itself on free enterprise. Unfortunately, however, the assumption that in competition the best man wins does not quite hold true in contracting for research and development. It is undeniable that the government, despite enormous expenditures, frequently fails to obtain the best scientific brains for its projects. The present contracting procedure tends to select contractors more by size, advertising budget, and financial ability than by scientific capability. It is an understandable precaution on the part of government project engineers and buyers to award the most critical projects to the larger companies with well-known names. If they fail, who is to blame the project engineer for having selected them?

At the same time, most creative scientists shy away from the "organization man" attitude and the emphasis on narrow specialization that characterize the large firms. One need only walk into any of the large aircraft companies, those with the major responsibility for our missile developments, to see why this is so. After passing the various security offices, one finds oneself in a huge, totally windowless expanse. As far as the eye can see, this area is covered with desks and drafting tables at which sit hundreds upon hundreds of men in their shirtsleeves. The even fluorescent light deprives them of all individual features, just as the inevitable air conditioning wipes out all distinctions of climate and time. At 11:22, say, an electronic buzz is heard. A group of men shuffles in unison toward the exit. It is their lunch hour, which, like their starting and leaving times, is staggered in eleven-minute intervals. There's no allowance for finishing a thought or completing a calculation. If the staggered time intervals were not rigidly observed,

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the great crush of humanity at the cafeteria or at the exits would bring about a breakdown of the entire machinery.

Creative scientists shun such an atmosphere and prefer the wider intellectual scope of the smaller research companies, many of which are formed and run by scientists. These small "brainy" companies are generally restricted to the smaller research and development programs and to crumbs of subcontracting that larger concerns are willing to forgo. The greatest advances in government-sponsored research and development have been in this area of smaller contracts: the small missiles, the development of components to systems, the design of ingenious computing and sensing instruments.

THERE IS a further severe disadvantage with the present system of research contracting. Although the scientist in private industry bears the major share of the responsibility for defense developments, he is not free to pursue what he considers the best course in his research programs. Research and development contracts are awarded on a year-to-year basis, and are renewed only if the results appear obviously promising. Frequently, despite good technical progress, they are canceled because of such extraneous factors as appropriations, new project engineers, or the effects of over-all military policy.

This basic instability gives the contractor's scientific project director little chance to do any long-range planning. Unless he produces a miracle at least once a year, he runs the risk of having to disperse an expensively acquired team of scientific specialists. It is almost inevitable that many decisions which should be made on a purely scientific basis must become colored by showmanship, that failures are often concealed, and that each project requires, in addition to the technical personnel, men skilled in the art of public relations. None of this makes the government project engineer's task of evaluating progress any easier.

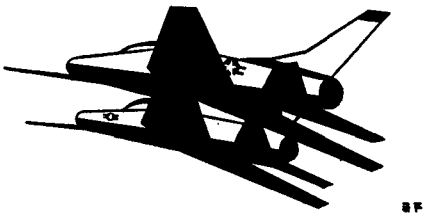
The worst effect of this practice is on the conduct of the research program itself, where it leads to an overemphasis on hardware, which looks like progress, at the expense of basic research, which appears to be little more than a collection of numbers.

This attitude toward measuring technical achievement is often masked as "practicality," while basic research is considered impractical and long-hair. Former Secretary of Defense Wilson expressed this feeling most clearly when he said, "Basic research is when you don't know what you are doing."

Actually, there are few things less practical than to engage in the development of a complicated system without first knowing something about the fundamental physical laws that will control it. Because of our hardware approach, we have far too many beautifully engineered, expensively constructed missiles that can withstand extremes of heat and cold, shock, and vibration—that are, in fact, all that a missile should be, with the exception of one liability: they can't get off the ground.

Lost in the Team

Since there is so little popular understanding of the nature of research, the American researcher himself is more often an object of gentle ridicule than of popular admiration, while his European and Russian counterparts are widely recognized and identified with their achievements. Most of our research projects, particularly the large ones, are nobody's babies. Scientists are yoked together in teams of specialists, each of whom sees a small section of the project; they are coordinated by administrators who see only the scheduling, cost, and liaison problems. There is usually a nominal head of the project, but his technical control is minimal; his main functions concern the public relations and funding of the program. No individual scientist here has the knowledge of having created something, nor does any individual taste the bitterness of failure. Both achievement and failure have been diluted by the team.



Must we follow a Soviet pattern to regain our technical leadership? Not at all. We must merely learn from those of our programs like the Sidewinder and the Manhattan Project, which have been successful in the past and which used a superb balance between individual performance and teamwork.

To show that such an approach works even in the space age, we can cite one more recent success story—that of Explorer, the first of the American satellites. Its development took place at the Army Ballistic Missile Agency (ABMA), in Huntsville, Alabama. Like NOTS, the birthplace of Sidewinder, ABMA is one of the few remaining government agencies that perform research and development work on their own. As a recognized center for ballistic missile and satellite research, testing, and pilot production, it carries prestige for its scientists.

Most of the work at ABMA is performed by scientists in the employ of the government; the nucleus of the group consists of about three hundred Germans who were experts on rocketry during the Second World War. However, outside contractors, both large and small, are used as well. Contractor and government scientists work together so closely that many contractors have their own facilities at ABMA to which their personnel are permanently assigned. Moreover, Explorer, like Sidewinder, grew out of one person's concept, not out of a compromise reached by a series of team committee meetings; its "father," Dr. Wernher von Braun, has now received national recognition.

THE SUCCESS FORMULA gleaned from these projects becomes quite simple. It provides that a project should grow from the creative imagination of individuals rather than from the concocted compromises of expert committees; that there should be prestige and individual recognition for the participants; that government and industrial scientists work together in direct contact rather than at arm's-length administrative formality; and that there be a stable budgetary foundation not subject to the whims of policy changes or the temporary appearance of success or failure.

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Independent Guinea's Morning After

EDWIN NEWMAN

GUINEA is the sort of country the word "backward" might have been invented to describe. The streets of the capital city of Conakry are lined with dim, dark huts covered with corrugated iron; numberless children scramble underfoot; the markets are dank and malodorous. Men with nothing to do cluster around every minor commercial enterprise, and old women (at least they look old) tend fires under smoking fish or pound away at rice.

In the countryside, the houses are of mud with straw roofs, and the children are naked and many have bloated and deformed bellies. The few cattle are not much larger than ponies. Wild animals, including the elephant and the rhinoceros, roam the Guinea forests. In the north, there are tribes still living by the bow and arrow.

Guinea's entire wealth comes from extraction—of bananas, coffee, palm kernels, iron ore, bauxite, and diamonds. There is no industry. The internal communications are rudimentary, and that is a flattering description. There isn't even approximate certainty about the size of the population: the French say two and a half million, the Guineans say four million and accuse the French of using the lower figure to hold down their contributions.

The literacy rate may be twelve per cent. The number of men qualified to run the government or hold any of the high civil-service posts is tiny. If, as Prime Minister Sekou Touré told me, his first task is to end his country's backwardness, it is a monumental task and it is hard to see what independence has to do with it.

But, as Touré also revealed, he had not expected that independence would mean a break with France. He had expected months of negotiation that would define Guinea's relationship with France. De Gaulle's brusque gesture of expulsion after Guinea's "No" vote on his constitution came as a shock.

Touré's ideas were a mixture of naïveté and shrewdness. He and his colleagues calculated that the western powers would not leave them without help, because that would merely open the door to the Russians or to Nasser's United Arab Republic. But they naïvely believed that there would be no change at all in the French attitude, and they were in no doubt whatever that western

help would come flooding in. That help they regard as the birthright of a new nation. One of them told me that with American help, which he thought should be provided without difficulty or qualms, "Every Guinean will sleep in an iron bedstead and his house will be transformed."

An Uncertain Future

They are also supremely confident that the world will go on buying their crops. Ask one of them what will happen if the French place a twenty per cent tariff on their bananas at the behest of other French banana-growing territories. He will smile the smile of the man who knows his country has the best bananas (which it hasn't; they are small, delicate, and expensive) and that if the French don't take them, other customers will have to be held off by main force.

The future of Guinea depends almost entirely on Sekou Touré. He is the undisputed leader; his party's power, organized cell by cell, extends into the remotest corners of the country. My own observation is that he is a man of considerable intelligence and that he would rather go on working with the Frenchmen he knows than with other westerners. Certainly he prefers them to the Russians, in spite of his youthful condemnation of "imperialism" ten years ago. This is one reason why he has not allowed any celebrations of independence; he doesn't want to give the French further cause for resentment.

Some of the local French civil servants are fiercely angry. They criticize de Gaulle for allowing the vote; they call Touré a Communist and say he got his vote by intimidation and violence. Calmer Frenchmen say he would have gotten a big majority in any case.

AT BEST, France is in an awkward position. If France helps Guinea, the other colonies of French West Africa will see no reason to stay with France; if the French let Guinea shift for itself, they will see American, Russian, or Egyptian influence replace their own. In Sekou Touré's view, this dilemma will resolve itself, for he and his colleagues believe that the rest of French West Africa will follow Guinea within two years. For the French, there is little to do but be guided by the wishes of the colonies that voted "Yes."

There is something mildly ludicrous about all this. Guinean officials spoke of having diplomatic representation in New York, London, Paris, Bonn, and Rome; there must be better ways of spending money. And if countries that need as much financial, material, and technical help as Guinea are to call themselves independent, the definition of independence will have to be revised. Still, Sekou Touré does have a sense of proportion. When I asked whether he would maintain an army, he said it would be only a small one and offered to make me its general.

The French are not hated. On the whole, under the direction of their highly intelligent special representative, a young man named Jean Risterucci, they are behaving correctly, and the general atmosphere is one of good will. The trouble is that independence accomplishes nothing apart from giving the Guineans a certain feeling of pride; it merely sets the old problems in a new framework.

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China: Ultra-Communism Down on the Farm

ISAAC DEUTSCHER

While the world's attention has been focused on the Quemoy crisis, Red China has been in the throes of a new and gigantic domestic upheaval, resulting from an attempt to organize the whole peasantry, five hundred million people, in "communes." This is the third upheaval that rural China has undergone in this decade. First, the landlords were expropriated and their land was shared out among the peasants, who were officially encouraged to continue as private farmers. Then, in the middle 1950's, more than a hundred million private farmsteads were reorganized into "co-operatives," modeled essentially on Soviet collective farms. And now the Communist Chinese rulers, moving ahead of their Soviet counterparts, are going beyond that stage of collectivization and replacing the collective farm by the commune.

Of these three upheavals, none has gone as deep as this one, for none has made such deep inroads into the traditional mode of life of the peasantry, which still constitutes four-fifths of China's population. There can be no doubt that the decree which initiated the "movement for the commune" is, if only because of the vast scale of the movement, one of the most significant events of our time.

Faster and Farther

The idea of the commune is not new. Shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution, in the years 1918-1923, it was tried out in Russia on a small scale. But that experiment ended in failure. The Russian communes had been formed by groups of idealists who hoped to set an example for the mass of peasantry. Within the commune, which in this respect differed essentially from the kolkhoz of later years, all private property was abolished. Land, cattle, and agricultural implements were owned in common. The members of the commune were not to get individual incomes but to draw on the commune's income in an egalitarian manner or "according to their needs." The experiment failed because the Russian peasant remained attached to his private farmstead. Communist farming, organized on an extremely low level of agricultural technique, was too poor to attract him. After a few years the communes, discredited and ridiculed, were dissolved.

When Stalin later set out to collectivize farming he forbade every mention of the commune. Ever since, the commune has remained under something like an ideological ban in the Soviet Union. In the kolkhoz the peasants still own privately small plots of land and about half the cattle; they trade their produce on the markets; and they draw unequal incomes from the kolkhoz so that in each there are "rich" and poor peasants just as there are rich and poor kolkhozes. The Russian collective farm has remained a halfway house between the private farm and the commune.

The Chinese leaders, obviously not content with this degree of collectivization, have now startlingly rehabilitated the commune. They have decided to move henceforth on the road of collectivization faster and farther than the Russians, despite the fact that in technology and productivity their farming is far behind the Russian. True, what they envisage is not to be modeled exactly on the early Soviet commune, but it is to be much closer to it than the kolkhoz is. The Chinese commune is to be a much larger unit than the Soviet kolkhoz. It is to consist of five, ten, or even twenty thousand families—about ten times more than in a kolkhoz after nearly thirty years of collectivization. The Chinese have taken up the idea of the "Agro-town," which Khrushchev once put forward, which Stalin repudiated, and which Khrushchev does not dare resuscitate even now. The Chinese peasants, unlike the Russians, are not to retain private plots of land, implements, and cattle. They are not to go on living in their private huts, within small households; instead all members of the commune are to be housed in a few central blocks of dwellings, with their own communal dining rooms, laundries, schools, etc., until the structure of the village resembles that of a collectivist town.

These sweeping changes are to be carried out within three to six years; and we are told that about a third of the peasantry, more than 150 million people, has already joined the communes.

In other respects, too, the Chinese appear to be eager to show that they are not following in Soviet footsteps but are opening new paths. In the Soviet Union, farming and industry are distinct and separate, the former remaining relatively dispersed and the latter being highly concentrated and predominantly urban. For the supply of implements, tractors, and transport, Soviet farming is completely dependent on the

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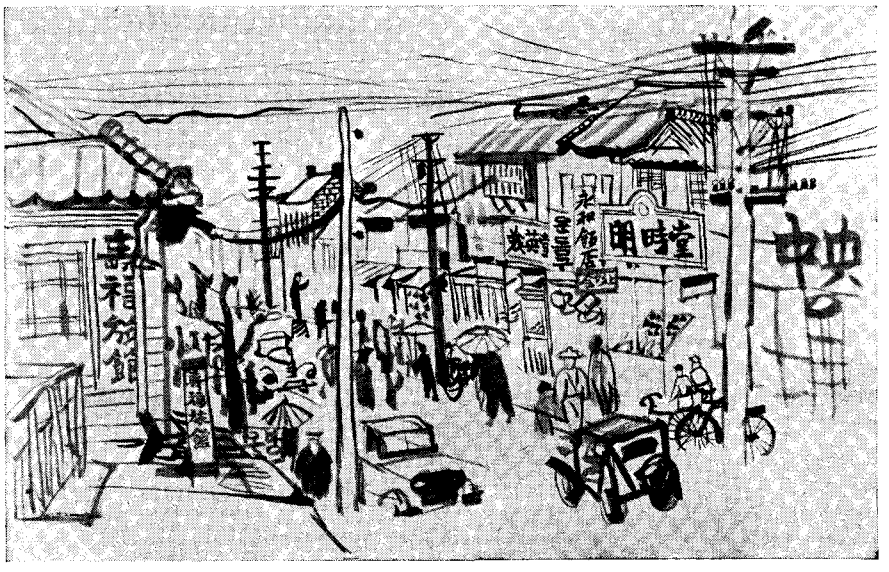
state-owned industry. In contrast, the Chinese commune is to combine local industry with farming.

The reform has also an important military aspect. The commune is to possess its own militia, a territorial military unit tied to the productive unit, so that the "armed hand" of the commune will participate in productive work and that "productive work will increasingly be organized along military lines." This again is an idea that was originally developed in Russia, in the early years of the revolution, when Trotsky "militarized" labor and organized the bulk of the Red Army as territorial militias attached to productive units. These experiments were gradually abandoned in Russia after the civil war. The workers revolted against the militarization of labor, and in later years the militias were considered to be inadequate for modern warfare. Further, since Trotsky had been the originator of these experiments, a stigma has attached to them ever since. Mao Tse-tung, however, has not been averse to drawing his ideas from the main fount of Communist heresy. His scheme has indeed a super-Trotskyist flavor; Trotsky never attempted to militarize labor on the scale of Mao's plan, and he undertook the experiment only under the stress of Russia's economic collapse in the final phase of the civil war.

MAO'S MOTIVES for this stupendous undertaking are varied and interconnected, and they are all rooted in the manifold disproportions between China's aspirations and resources. There is, first of all, the general lack of balance between China's population and wealth. Mao and his pupils are no Malthusians: they hold that the larger the nation's manpower, the more can it produce (especially when it does not have to produce for profit only) and the quicker can the nation's wealth grow.

But Mao realizes that although this principle may be valid in the long run, the immediate pressure of China's population on its means of subsistence is severe, and that it must become even more severe with the popular expectation of a higher standard of living. By concentrating the whole rural population in large but compact productive units and by introducing a new division of labor within the units, Mao hopes he will be able to achieve a dramatic rise in the national productivity of labor.

Mao believes—his entourage tells everyone who cares to listen—that he has avoided and can continue to avoid Stalin's major errors in collectivization and industrialization. In collectivization, Mao says, Stalin relied primarily on coercion. In industrialization, he relied almost exclusively on large-scale and long-term schemes, as a consequence of which all links between industry and farming were severed for a time. Soviet farming, unsupported by small-scale local industry, was bound to fall behind badly during the transition period, before the new industry was ready to provide it with enough machines, tractors, and fertilizers.



The Plan's Advantages

These, then, are the major mistakes against which Mao is on his guard. Of course the Chinese leaders, too, have their ambitious large-scale and long-term industrial schemes that should allow them to overtake Great Britain industrially within a few years. China's coal output is already about as high as Britain's, and its output of steel is about half as large. But even after China has won this race—a race watched with bated breath by the whole of Asia—its per capita industrial output will still be only one-twelfth or one-thirteenth of the British. China's large-scale industry will not yet be able to absorb more than a tiny fraction of its rural surplus; and its agriculture may still remain starved of iron, steel, and machinery. Hence Mao's emphasis on the combination of industry and agriculture within the commune.

That industry can be only of a most backward character: it will consist of primitive workshops and will be based on old-fashioned handicraft. But even this is better than no industry at all. The commune's primitive workshops can keep the commune's farm supplied with plows until enough tractors and machines are forthcoming from the modern government-built plants. Local rural industry may also soon absorb the surplus rural population and give many peasants preliminary industrial training before they are transferred to urban industry. The commune is to serve as a reservoir of semi-skilled industrial manpower on which the planning authorities can gradually draw.

The military aspect of the commune, which has been greatly played up during the Quemoy crisis, fits in with this pattern. Already some years ago Peking promulgated a law introducing conscription, but it has been a dead letter. The armed forces have not been in a position to take in the many millions of young men who every year become liable for military service. There have not been enough barracks, not enough equipment, not enough training staffs. Now the millions of potential conscripts are to receive at least paramilitary training within the commune, which thus is

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also to become a reservoir of semi-skilled military manpower.

Finally, it goes without saying that Peking's rulers expect to gain obvious political advantages. It should be easier to exert political control over a peasantry concentrated in Agrotowns than over a dispersed rural population.

Are the Chinese Different?

If the objectives of the Chinese movement for communes are clear enough, its prospects are hazy. How, one wonders, have the Chinese peasants received the latest orders and slogans issued from Peking? How do they react to this blow that Mao's party has struck against private property and the traditional way of life of rural China? Are the Chinese peasants really devoid of the "individualistic instincts" that have made peasants in so many other countries put up a desperate resistance to collectivization? When the Soviet peasants revolted against Stalin's forcible collectivization, they slaughtered half their cattle, smashed implements, and set fire to their crops, thus to some extent defeating collectivization even while they themselves were being crushed. Is some such determined revolt now latent in the Chinese countryside? Or are the peasants joining the communes "with enthusiasm," as Peking claims and as some recent western travelers believe?

It is difficult not only for outsiders and foreign travelers but even for the rulers in Peking to judge what is going on in the hearts of a mass of half a billion people. But it may be that Mao Tse-tung and his party are now getting dividends from the caution and flexibility with which, in contrast to Stalin and his followers, they arranged the opening phases of collectivization some years ago. Stalin at first attempted to impose wholesale collectivization at a stroke and to confiscate all the peasants' belongings; only bloody resistance forced him to retreat, to compromise, to make concessions to the peasants' "property instincts" in order to save the general framework of the collective farm. The initial collision, however, was so violent that memories of it survive in the Soviet Union to this day and even now weigh upon relations between state and peasantry. The Chinese collectivization of the middle 1950's has evidently not led to any comparable conflict and shock. The peasantry was drawn into the co-operatives gradually and mildly. The farmer's proverbial individualism, which revolted against Stalin's raw surgery, appears to have fallen into a coma under Mao's anesthetic treatment.

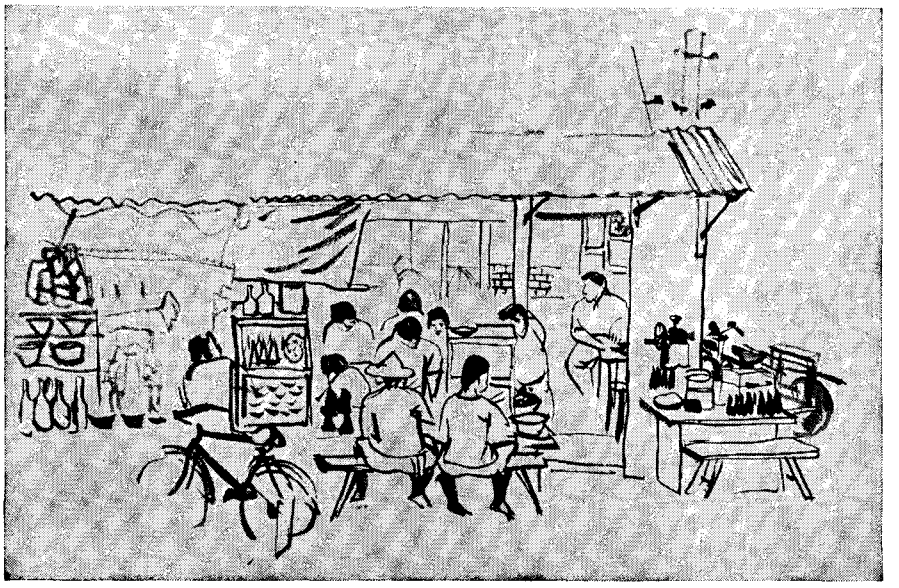
The difference in results has shown up quickly. Stalin's collectivization was followed by a steep and prolonged decline in the productivity of Soviet agriculture and the death of millions in famines. Mao's collectivization, on the contrary, has led to a steady rise in farming output. This has been accounted for in part by the building of anti-flood dams and by large-scale irrigation works, which were more easily undertaken with collectively organized labor than with the old-time individualistic villagers. In any case, this year China has a record harvest, nearly twice as large as last year's and more than three times larger than the last harvest before the revolution. The achievement is all the more remarkable because it has been obtained with the most primitive technical means, mainly on the basis of co-operated manual labor.

Unlike the Soviet peasants of the 1930's, the Chinese have seen their well-being improving rapidly with collectivization, however modest that improvement may be by any western standard. These benefits seem to have weakened their attachment to private farming and perhaps even reconciled them to a collectivist economy. Having secured this favorable start for collectivization, Mao may find it easier to take the peasants a stage further toward the commune. He still proceeds with great caution and keeps his avenues of retreat open. He plans to draw out the whole process of reorganization over a number of years. He delays the introduction of an egalitarian distribution of income within the commune and tries to give due weight to individual rewards and incentives. He warns the Communists against the use of coercion against the peasants, and at the same time he seeks to overwhelm the peasantry's mind with a most intensive propaganda for the commune. With an already favorable start, with the use of such varied ways and means, and with so much subtlety, his régime may succeed where no other Communist government has succeeded.

However, this is only a hypothetical view of the prospects; some time must elapse before the reaction of the Chinese peasantry can be gauged. It is still possible that the experiment will crash spectacularly and cause grave social turmoil.

Damning with No Praise

In Russia these latest Chinese developments have been greeted with reserve and tacit irony. *Pravda* published the decree of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on September 11, but more than a month later the Soviet press still refrained from giving its blessing to the move. While its pages were full of declarations of solidarity with China over the Quemoy conflict and



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of glowing tributes to Mao's other domestic achievements, no mention was made of this latest and most momentous domestic development. Such silence speaks louder than any amount of comment.

Not only is Moscow skeptical about Mao's latest undertaking, it also senses heresy. Khrushchev may resent the fact that Mao is fulfilling the Agrotown scheme, which he himself had to abandon. More important, the whole trend of Chinese domestic policy is in implicit conflict with Soviet policy. Khrushchev has just made a series of important concessions to the peasants, relaxing the Stalinist rigors of collectivization: he has sold the state-owned machine tractor stations to the collective farms, he has freed the peasants from compulsory food deliveries, and he has attempted to place the economic relationship between state and peasantry on something like a market basis. To Soviet ears there is something almost blasphemous in the Chinese talk about the commune's superiority to any ordinary collective farm, if only because for years to come the Chinese commune will be based on a technical level of farming far lower than that prevailing in the Soviet kolkhoz. Similarly, the Chinese territorial militias with their "soldier-citizens" and "soldier-laborers" have too much of the early Bolshevik aura about them to please the present Soviet rulers.

Evidently the Chinese leaders are taking their talk about their own "road to socialism" much more seriously than the Russians like. Sooner or later these implicit divergencies between the Soviet and Chinese attitudes may give rise to new controversy in the Communist camp. The whole course of collectivization in China is unmistakably, if only implicitly, a critique of the Soviet road to socialism.

Moscow appears to be as apprehensive about Mao's present "ultraradical" deviation from Stalinist or post-Stalinist orthodoxy as it was two years about his "ultraliberal" Hundred Flowers policy. In Moscow's view, Mao went too far in promising freedom of expression and was compelled to reimpose monolithic discipline. Is he not now indulging in dangerous illusions about the peasantry's willingness to accept the commune? In both cases Mao's ambitions may have exceeded China's resources and possibilities. When he tried to carry de-Stalinization further than the Russians had carried it, he ignored the circumstance that the basic factor behind Soviet de-Stalinization was Soviet industrial and educational progress, which had become incompatible with many of the totalitarian practices of the Stalin era.

Mao has since discovered that his essays in "liberalization" accord ill with the mass discipline that is required in the initial phase of forced industrialization. On the other hand, Moscow is inclined to take the view that China is industrially and socially too backward for the "advanced forms of socialism" which Mao now attempts to foster. The Soviet Union, with its powerful state-owned industry and its vastly expanded urban working class, still shrinks from imposing the Agrotown and the commune on its peasantry, which is relatively much weaker vis-à-vis the state and the urban working class than is the Chinese peasantry. Is it not, then, reckless of Mao to defy the individualism of his peasantry?

These are the questions pondered by the guardians of orthodoxy and the policymakers in Moscow. But much more than orthodoxy and dogma is involved. If the movement for the commune succeeds in China, the Soviet rulers may well be tempted or driven to follow in Mao's footsteps. Khrushchev may then take up once again his Agrotown scheme, and the upheaval now shaking rural China may well spread to the Soviet Union.

Pandit Nehru's One-Party Democracy

GEORGE BAILEY

The cry of "Crisis in the Congress Party!" went up immediately when, early last May, Nehru expressed his intention of withdrawing "for some time" from office. The clamor did not die down even when, shortly afterward, he settled for a month's vacation and agreed to stay on. A number of things lent substance to the widespread contention that the Congress Party was disintegrating. First, there was the dramatic success of the Communist Party of India in the state of Kerala last year, when the Communists managed to form a coalition government there. Next came a governmental crisis in the state of Orissa, when the Congress-held ministry resigned on orders from the central party high command. Shortly afterward, a confused intraparty scandal broke out in the Punjab, where some of the chief minister's relatives had abused their family connections for political purposes. Finally, Congress Party candidates were successively defeated in by-elections in Devicolam (Kerala) by a Communist and in Gergoa (Punjab) by an independent.

There were other somber developments. The government's much-heralded and strongly backed Community Development Program seemed to be bogging down. The chronic anemia of India's foreign-exchange reserves had become acute, despite Prime Minister Nehru's diversionary mollifications.

But for all this, and serious as much of it was and still is, the Congress Party crisis soon became only the crisis that might have been if Nehru had resigned. The fact that he did not resign decided the issue—at least for the present and probably for a long time to come.

It would be difficult to exaggerate Nehru's prestige in his home country. He is the darling of the people and (as he once pictured himself in a chapter of his autobiography which has been expurgated

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from the recent editions) the savior of the nation, mounted indifferently on a white elephant. His prerogatives, especially within his own party, are royal. And he makes use of them. This is part of the trouble, as was pointed out in a recent edition of *Thought,* an English-language weekly and strong supporter of the Congress Party published in New Delhi.

According to *Thought,* U. N. Dhebar, then chief minister of the state of Uttar Pradesh, wanted an end to "loose talk and loud thinking" by the top leadership in regard to the state of affairs of the Congress. The magazine went on to comment that "it is obvious that the loudest 'thinker' as well as the most persistent critic . . . of the Congress organization has been none other than the Prime Minister himself. . . . The Congress had to be virtuous and the Congress had to be good, Dhebar pontificated, because that was the only way to relieve Nehru of anxiety and to assure him that the 'trends and events that have distressed him will not recur.' This was the cult of personality par excellence."

'An Investment in Man'

I attended my first prime minister's press conference in June, when Nehru, fresh from two weeks' vacation, held forth for an hour and a half. It was a virtuoso performance. The prime minister covered a wide variety of subjects, ranging from Pakistan and Kashmir through Algeria and France to the proposed summit conference. He philosophized, moralized, and lectured. He did everything exactly right, even remembering to forget himself in appropriate places and, on the subject of Indo-Pakistan border skirmishes, to pound the table in well-controlled anger. He joked and riposted beautifully.

Toward the end of the conference, a young Indian correspondent stood up and put a question: "Sir, there are moments of gloom in many minds when they consider India's future. We get rather depressed at times. Do you have any comment on this?"

"This is a fascinating question," said the prime minister, and he stared into space pensively for a long moment. He then answered at length, explaining that one reason for the gloom was the international situation. So far as the future of India was concerned, the real question was "the quality of human beings that we produce." By "quality" he meant "the co-operative habit." Economic planning was important but its importance was always subject to that quality. "I have been thinking," said the prime minister, "more and more of an investment in man." And on this reflective pinnacle the question was left hanging.

After the conference an American correspondent gave his opinion: "There is no other statesman alive

who could do that—completely hypnotize one hundred and fifty correspondents for an hour and a half and not say a damned thing."

On the following day I interviewed the prime minister privately and found the consummate showman replaced by a quiet, composed man who leaned forward when he listened and still further forward when he spoke. He spoke as evenly and as softly as an Oxford don during a tutorial.

In answer to my observation that the Indian press was full of stories about the disintegration of the Congress Party, Nehru smiled. "You should read the newspapers of the 1930's and 1940's—they said exactly the same thing then." He went on to discuss the party's situation at length.

"Before independence," he said, "most of the Indian parties—even the Communist Party—were part and parcel of the Congress. Of course, it was different then. We were in opposition to something: we were a revolutionary party. Now we have lost our *élan*—inevitably and necessarily. The object of our opposition has been removed. It was a great cementing force. Most people expected manna to drop from heaven once we had gained our independence—and when independence came they were very much disappointed." Nevertheless, he said, the Congress Party was still the greatest political force in India.

"Our position," he went on, "is still very strong. Of five hundred seats in the Lok Sabha [House of Representatives] we hold 350 or so." (In fact the Congress Party holds 365 seats, representing seventy-three per cent of the popular vote. The Socialists have never received more than eleven per cent, while the Communists received only slightly more than five per cent in the last general elections in 1957.)

True, since independence "some fringes have detached themselves from the Congress," but the party's popularity and prestige were still enormous. "Because of our popularity," said Nehru, "we were able to put through a number of rather unpopular measures. For instance, we changed the marriage laws and introduced divorce. There was no divorce in Hindu society previously. I dare say that if you subjected the whole thing to a referendum it would be defeated." He chuckled.

Nehru had already made clear what he meant by "detached fringes" in an informal speech before the All India Congress Conference in May. At that same time he made a basic policy statement:

". . . The Congress Socialist Party . . . started off on a completely wrong footing. By remaining in the Congress they could have done much for socialism, but what they did was amazing. 'We will drive out the old fogies of the Congress and shall control and make the Congress socialistic,' they said. But the 'old fogies' were not weaklings and they had very considerable influence over the

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millions of people of India and among them was Gandhiji. The result was that the Congress Socialist Party in its excessive desire to seize power from the Congress injured the cause of socialism in the country."

No Room for Opposition

At one point during my interview with Nehru I observed that he didn't seem alarmed or even concerned about India's Communists.

"No, we are not," he replied. "The Communist Party of India derives its strength from three sources: it wins out of pure opposition; it profits from the reflected prestige of Communist China and the Soviet Union; and its members are disciplined. But in Kerala their position is very shaky: they hold a majority of only two seats. No, that's not the danger. What is serious is when the Congress Party does not have an absolute majority and the opposition is splintered as it is in Orissa. In such a case you get a messy situation and it impedes our progress."

Nehru steadfastly professes to discount both the Communist and Socialist Parties of India as major political factors. He also discounts the possibility of an opposition—that is, an opposition capable of forming a stable national government—arising out of the Congress Party itself, either by way of a massive split or gradual defection. Present-day India has often been described as a "one-party democracy." Although Nehru does not say so directly, his speeches and statements clearly imply that he sees no room for a political opposition either at present or in the foreseeable future. India's problems are too basic, too appalling in both their magnitude and nature, to permit any dissipation of the national effort. "You see," he said during our talk, "the living standard of our people is generally much lower than that of the Russians before the revolution. We jumped into full political democracy before any economic build-up had been made."

In addition to an economic build-up, a solution to India's problems involves creating a social as well as a national consciousness in the people. Nehru's most frequent public appeal is for "unity and emotional integration." The chief target of his censure is not Communism but "communalism." Thanks to his unceasing efforts, "communalism" has become a term of abuse in India. It is used to describe any organization, group, or general tendency "which works for the interests of a caste or religious community—as opposed to the general welfare."

To solve the complex of problems peculiar to India, the Congress Party planned and implemented a Community Development Program in 1952. This is a rural reconstruction effort designed to include the whole of India. Its aim is the promotion and improvement of every aspect of village life—education, health, agriculture, animal husbandry, village industry, and housing. "Blocks" of approximately a hundred villages (sixty to seventy thousand people) constitute a development unit, a target area for intensive effort. Each unit has a Block Development Officer who commands a staff of technical experts and allots funds and equipment.

In Gandhi's Footsteps

By the end of the first Five-Year Plan, the program had reached eighty million people, but three-fourths of the rural population of India are still outside its reach. Under the second Five-Year Plan, now at its midway point, all rural India is to be covered by the program. The village, which is the basic unit, is expected to contribute its share toward financing its development, particularly in building construction. A *panchayat* (village council) is elected as the directive and administrative body.

The Community Development Program is the Congress Party's most powerful political weapon. It is also the one most apt to boomerang, because the fortunes of the party depend largely on its relative success. This is clear enough from the fact that only one man has ever managed to reach the inert masses of India. That single exception was Gandhi. And it is of prime significance that the Community Development Program was inspired largely by Gandhi's rural construction efforts and is, in a basic sense, a continuation and development of those efforts. If the program is generally successful, the Congress Party will reap a harvest in terms of active mass political support.

"We must be careful," Nehru told me, "while pursuing the program energetically, not to awaken expectations which we are in no position to fulfill." By the beginning of this year, however, it had become obvious that the program had been spread too far, too fast, and too thin. In too many cases, once the government's social and economic shock troops had been withdrawn, the villagers lapsed into their old ways. As a whole the program had failed to arouse any sustained interest and initiative among the people.

IT WAS AGAINST this background that I asked Nehru about his June press-conference allusion to "an investment in man."

"I am not satisfied," he said, "with the quality of our education. Education is the most important factor in national development, and the key figure in the program is the teacher. Our teachers are very poorly paid. Why, the man who sweeps out this office makes more than the average teacher." (A secondary-school teacher in India earns seventy-five rupees —about $15—a month.) "I want to raise the teachers' wages so that we can get the best people and keep them. I am trying to persuade our people that a teacher is much more important than a school building. They can do without school buildings. They can sit under a tree or anything that will provide shade in the summer and shelter in the winter. But we can't build schools and pay teachers a decent wage too. We don't have very much money."

There is also the related problem of India's growing army of "displaced intellectuals." Every year the country's thirty-seven universities turn out tens of thousands of liberal-arts graduates, the majority of whom can find no place in government or civil service and are unqualified for employment in commerce or industry, where the great demand is for technicians and specialists. This intellectual flotsam soon becomes disaffected and some of it is drawn off to the radical political parties, chiefly to the Communist Party. As Nehru points out, it is not only a question of poor quality but also of kind —"the type of education is wrong."

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The emphasis should, of course, be on polytechnical courses, but here again the means are lacking. Within the terms of the second Five-Year Plan, India's shortage of engineers and technicians has already become acute. The government's Engineering Personnel Committee estimates that by the end of 1960 there will be a shortage of 1,800 engineers and 8,000 technicians. This is assuming that the increase of technical institutons called for by the plan will be achieved. The assumption is rash.

The Communists' Dilemma

It remains to be seen whether Nehru's seeming confidence in the face of Communist maneuvers is equally rash. Many think so. There are, however, three factors that may militate against the Communists.

The first thing to be noted is that while Nehru may be the only socialist in the Congress Party leadership, his presence in effect makes the Congress Party socialistic. "The broad approach of the average Congressman," said Nehru recently, "was all along socialistic. Some of our Provincial Congress Committees passed resolutions precisely in terms of socialism even twenty-seven years ago." *The* socialist party of India is not the Communist Party or the Socialist Party but the Congress Party; it cornered socialism decades ago. The great socialist efforts in India since independence—the Five-Year Plans and the development programs—were conceived and carried out, or are being carried out, by the Congress. The Indian Communists have been obliged to endorse publicly and repeatedly the socialistic policies of the Congress while denying that they are "truly socialistic." The Communist Party has been reduced to sniping because it cannot bring its heavy ideological artillery to bear.

A SECOND FACTOR is Gandhiism. This is the most powerful emotional-traditional force in India. Gandhi was the guiding spirit of the Congress Party, and his name and policies are unalterably associated with it. Moreover, Nehru is Gandhi's only political heir. The nature of Gandhiism is deeply conservative as well as revolutionary, and more than a little mystic—characteristics that have made it difficult for the Communist mind to comprehend.

Stalin began the unending series of "official" evaluations in 1925 when he likened Gandhi to the liberals who rallied to Czarism and supported it by creating "nothing but confusion." In 1935 the Indian Communist R. Palme Dutt described Gandhiism as "passive fascism." In 1947 the Russian E. Zhukov described Gandhi as "the apostle of Indian backwardness, the opponent of industrialization . . . the bard of the spinning wheel and the misery of the village cottage." In 1953 the Soviet economist E. Varga wrote that Gandhi and his disciples "used anti-imperialist demagogy, but they preferred a compromise with English imperialism on a feudal bourgeois basis to genuine independence on a democratic revolutionary basis." The *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* describes Gandhi at considerable length as "a traitor."

Recently, however, the Communists have been obliged to change their views on Gandhi. During a visit to India in 1955, Bulganin declared that while the Soviets did not agree with Gandhi's philosophic views, they did consider him "an outstanding leader who did much for the development of a peace-loving attitude in your people and for their struggle for independence." Communist writers, with the Soviets in the forefront, quickly followed suit. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the Communist chief minister of Kerala, has just published a book on Gandhi, *Mahatma and the Ism,* which attempts to correct the Communist appraisal of the man and his political philosophy. In vain. The Communists are still constrained to reject Gandhiism outright because its basic tenet of nonviolence "frustrated the revolutionary energy of the people." Moreover, Gandhi's dictum that "the means justify the end" runs directly counter to the whole Communist philosophy of revolution. The gap cannot be bridged.

Nehru and Then What?

The final factor the Communists will have to overcome in India is Nehru himself. His attitude toward Communism inside India contrasts sharply with his official attitude toward the Communist bloc. There are a good many reasons for this seeming paradox: India's role of chief arbiter of the neutralist bloc between East and West; its border of more than a thousand miles with Red China and its proximity to Soviet Asia; and its long history of anti-colonial struggle against a background of socio-economic stagnation. India's struggle was against the so-called "classic colonial" powers—Britain, France, and Portugal: it has no direct experience with the new Soviet colonialism, but is rapidly gaining indirect experience of it.

Nehru is gradually being forced to change his studied neutralist stand inside India because of the constant irritant of the Indian Com-

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munist Party and, specifically, the strong-arm methods of the Communist-controlled Kerala government. But these two attitudes of Nehru's are not hermetically sealed from one another: the interactive influence between them is becoming increasingly apparent.

In a brochure recently published by the Congress Party, Nehru takes Communism as a whole severely to task: "With its suppression of individual freedom, Communism calls forth violent resistance. It sacrifices those cultural and spiritual values of life which comprise man's basic nature . . . In its luckless association with violence it frees the evil tendencies latent in man."

He concludes with the statement that "In the present era colonial oppression still has not ceased, as shown by the Suez episode, while the events in Hungary have made it clear that the longing for national independence is stronger than any ideology and cannot be permanently suppressed." This is a far cry from the Nehru of 1933, who in his book *Glimpses of World History,* written in prison for his daughter, stated his preference for Shelley over Byron because the former championed economic freedom while the latter preached only national independence.

Perhaps Nehru's most damaging statement concerning domestic Communism was made in a press conference this spring when he remarked, almost casually, that "The thinking apparatus of the Communist Party of India lies outside this country." The organs of that party have since published tens of thousands of words in attempted rebuttal.

NEHRU has no designated political successor. But his political heirs within the Congress are numerous. There are a good many able young men in the top echelons of the party who have benefited directly and continue to benefit from Nehru's teaching (like Gandhi, Nehru is first and foremost a teacher); who are, as it were, being groomed en masse for leadership. These men are unknown to the general public either within or outside India—obscured and all but inaudible behind the strongest "cult of personality" in the world today. But they are there.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

A Broadcaster Talks to His Colleagues

A speech delivered before the Radio and Television News Directors' Association

EDWARD R. MURROW

THIS JUST MIGHT do nobody any good. At the end of this discourse a few people may accuse this reporter of fouling his own comfortable nest; and your organization may be accused of having given hospitality to heretical and even dangerous thoughts.

But the elaborate structure of networks, advertising agencies, and sponsors will not be shaken or altered. It is my desire, if not my duty, to try to talk to you journeymen with some candor about what is happening to radio and television in this generous and capacious land.

I have no technical advice or counsel to offer those of you who labor in this vineyard that produces words and pictures. You will forgive me for not telling you that the instruments with which you work are miraculous; that your responsibility is unprecedented; or that your aspirations are frequently frustrated. It is not necessary to remind you—the fact that your voice is amplified to the degree where it reaches from one end of the country to the other does not confer upon you greater wisdom or understanding than you possessed when your voice reached only from one end of the bar to the other. All of these things you know.

You should also know at the outset that, in the manner of witnesses before Congressional committees, I appear here voluntarily—by invitation—that I am an employee of the Columbia Broadcasting System, that I am neither an officer nor a director of that corporation, and that these remarks are of a "do-it-yourself" nature. If what I have to say is responsible, then I alone am responsible for the saying of it. Seeking neither approbation from my employers, nor new sponsors, nor acclaim from the critics of radio and television, I cannot well be disappointed. Believing that potentially the commercial system of broadcasting as practiced in this country is the best and freest yet devised, I have decided to express my concern about what I believe to be happening to radio and television. These instruments have been good to me beyond my due. There exist in my mind no reasonable grounds for personal complaint. I have no feud, either with my employers, any sponsors, or with the professional critics of radio and television. But I am seized with an abiding fear regarding what these two instruments are doing to our society, our culture, and our heritage.

'Shield the Sensitive Citizens'

Our history will be what we make it. And if there are any historians about fifty or a hundred years from now, and there should be preserved the kinescopes for one week of all three networks, they will there find recorded in black-and-white, or color, evidence of decadence, escapism, and insulation from the realities of the world in which we live. I invite your attention to the television schedules of all networks between the hours of eight and eleven P.M. Eastern Time. Here you will find only fleeting and spasmodic reference to the fact that this nation is in mortal danger. There are, it is true, occasional informative programs presented in that intellectual ghetto on Sunday afternoons. But during the daily peak viewing periods, television in

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the main insulates us from the realities of the world in which we live. If this state of affairs continues, we may alter an advertising slogan to read: "Look Now, Pay Later." For surely we shall pay for using this most powerful instrument of communication to insulate the citizenry from the hard and demanding realities which must be faced if we are to survive. I mean the word—"survive"—literally. If there were to be a competition in indifference, or perhaps in insulation from reality, then Nero and his fiddle, Chamberlain and his umbrella, could not find a place on an early-afternoon sustaining show. If Hollywood were to run out of Indians, the program schedules would be mangled beyond all recognition. Then some courageous soul with a small budget might be able to do a documentary telling what, in fact, we have done—and are still doing—to the Indians in this country. But that would be unpleasant. And we must at all costs shield the sensitive citizens from anything that is unpleasant.

I am entirely persuaded that the American public is more reasonable, restrained, and more mature than most of our industry's program planners believe. Their fear of controversy is not warranted by the evidence. I have reason to know, as do many of you, that when the evidence on a controversial subject is fairly and calmly presented, the public recognizes it for what it is—an effort to illuminate rather than to agitate.

Several years ago, when we undertook to do a program on Egypt and Israel, well-meaning, experienced, and intelligent friends shook their heads and said: "This you cannot do—you will be handed your head—it is an emotion-packed controversy, and there is no room for reason in it." We did the program. Zionists, anti-Zionists, the Friends of the Middle East, Egyptian and Israeli officials said, with a faint note of surprise: "It was a fair count. The information was there. We have no complaints."

Our experience was similar with two half-hour programs dealing with cigarette smoking and lung cancer. Both the medical profession and the tobacco industry co-operated in a rather wary fashion. But in the end of the day they were both reasonably content. The subject of radioactive fallout and the banning of nuclear tests was and is highly controversial. But according to what little evidence there is, viewers were prepared to listen to both sides with reason and restraint. This is not said to claim any special or unusual competence in the presentation of controversial subjects, but rather to indicate that timidity in these areas is not warranted—by the evidence.

RECENTLY, network spokesmen have been disposed to complain that the professional critics of television have been "rather beastly." There have been hints that somehow competition for the advertising dollar has caused the critics of print to gang up on television and radio. This reporter has no desire to defend the critics. They have space in which to do that on their own behalf. But it remains a fact that the newspapers and magazines are the only instruments of mass communication which remain free from sustained and regular critical comment. If the network spokesmen are so anguished about what appears in print, let them come forth and engage in a little sustained and regular comment regarding newspapers

and magazines. It is an ancient and sad fact that most people in network television and radio have an exaggerated regard for what appears in print. And there have been cases where executives have refused to make even private comment on a program for which they were responsible until they had read the reviews in print. This is hardly an exhibition of confidence.

THE OLDEST EXCUSE of the networks for their timidity is their youth. Their spokesmen say: "We are young; we have not developed the traditions nor acquired the experience of the older media." If they but knew it, they are building those traditions, creating those precedents every day. Each time they yield to a voice from Washington or any political pressure, each time they eliminate something that might offend some section of the community, they are creating their own body of precedent and tradition. They are, in fact, not content to be "half safe."

Nowhere is this better illustrated than by the fact that the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission publicly prods broadcasters to engage in their legal right to editorialize. Of course, to undertake an editorial policy, overt and clearly labeled, and obviously unsponsored, requires a station or a network to be responsible. Most stations today probably do not have the manpower to assume this responsibility, but the manpower could be recruited. Editorials would not be profitable; if they had a cutting edge they might even offend. It is much easier, much less troublesome, to use the money-making machine of television and radio merely as a conduit through which to channel anything that is not libelous, obscene, or defamatory. In that way one has the illusion of power without responsibility.

'I Say It Isn't News'

So far as radio—that most satisfying and rewarding instrument—is concerned, the diagnosis of its difficulties is rather easy. And obviously I speak only of news and information. In order to progress it need only go backward—to the time when singing commercials were not allowed on news reports, when there was no middle commercial in a fifteen-minute news report; when radio was rather proud, alert, and fast. I recently asked a network official, "Why this great rash of five-minute news reports (including three commercials) on week ends?" He replied: "Because that seems to be the only thing we can sell."

In this kind of complex and confusing world, you can't tell very much about the *why* of the news in broadcasts where only three minutes is available for news. The only man who could do that was Elmer Davis, and his kind aren't about any more. If radio news is to be regarded as a commodity, only acceptable when salable, and only when packaged to fit the advertising appropriation of a sponsor, then I don't care

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what you call it—I say it isn't news.

My memory also goes back to the time when the fear of a slight reduction in business did not result in an immediate cutback in bodies in the News and Public Affairs Department, at a time when network profits had just reached an all-time high. We would all agree, I think, that whether on a station or a network, the stapling machine is a poor substitute for a newsroom typewriter.

ONE OF THE minor tragedies of television news and information is that the networks will not even defend their vital interests. When my employer, CBS, through a combination of enterprise and good luck, did an interview with Nikita Khrushchev, the President uttered a few ill-chosen, uninformed words on the subject, and the network practically apologized. This produced a rarity. Many newspapers defended the CBS right to produce the program and commended it for initiative. But the other networks remained silent.

Likewise when John Foster Dulles, by personal decree, banned American journalists from going to Communist China and subsequently offered contradictory explanations. For his fiat the networks entered only a mild protest. Then they apparently forgot the unpleasantness. Can it be that this national industry is content to serve the public interest only with the trickle of news that comes out of Hong Kong? to leave its viewers in ignorance of the cataclysmic changes that are occurring in a nation of six hundred million people? I have no illusions about the difficulties of reporting from a dictatorship; but our British and French allies have been better served—in their public interest—with some very useful information from their reporters in Communist China.

Dollars vs. Duty

One of the basic troubles with radio and television news is that both instruments have grown up as an incompatible combination of show business, advertising, and news. Each of the three is a rather bizarre and demanding profession. And when you get all three under one roof, the dust never settles. The top management of the networks, with a few notable exceptions, has been trained in advertising, research, sales, or show business. But by the nature of the corporate structure, they also make the final and crucial decisions having to do with news and public affairs. Frequently they have neither the time nor the competence to do this. It is not easy for the same small group of men to decide whether to buy a new station for millions of dollars, build a new building, alter the rate card, buy a new Western, sell a soap opera, decide what defensive line to take in connection with the latest Congressional inquiry, how much money to spend on promoting a new program, what additions or deletions

should be made in the existing covey or clutch of vice-presidents, and at the same time—frequently on the same long day—to give mature, thoughtful consideration to the manifold problems that confront those who are charged with the responsibility for news and public affairs.

Sometimes there is a clash between the public interest and the corporate interest. A telephone call or a letter from the proper quarter in Washington is treated rather more seriously than a communication from an irate but not politically potent viewer. It is tempting enough to give away a little air time for frequently irresponsible and unwarranted utterances in an effort to temper the wind of criticism.

Upon occasion, economics and editorial judgment are in conflict. And there is no law which says that dollars will be defeated by duty. Not so long ago the President of the United States delivered a television address to the nation. He was discoursing on the possibility or probability of war between this nation and the Soviet Union and Communist China—a reasonably compelling subject. Two networks—CBS and NBC—delayed that broadcast for an hour and fifteen minutes. If this decision was dictated by anything other than financial reasons, the networks didn't deign to explain those reasons. That hour-and-fifteen-minute delay, by the way, is about twice the time required for an ICBM to travel from the Soviet Union to major targets in the United States. It is difficult to believe that this decision was made by men who love, respect, and understand news.

'Both Free *and* Enterprising'

So far I have been dealing largely with the deficit side of the ledger, and the items could be expanded. But I have said, and I believe, that potentially we have in this country a free-enterprise system of radio and television which is superior to any other. But to achieve its promise, it must be both free and enterprising. There is no suggestion here that networks or individual stations should operate as philanthropies. But I can find nothing in the Bill of Rights or the Communications Act which says that they must increase their net profits each year, lest the Republic collapse. I do not suggest that news and information should be subsidized by foundations or private subscriptions. I am aware that the networks have expended and are expending very considerable sums of money on public affairs programs from which they cannot hope to receive any financial reward. I have had the privilege at CBS of presiding over a considerable number of such programs. I testify and am able to stand here and say that I have never had a program turned down by my superiors because of the money it would cost.

But we all know that you cannot reach the potential maximum audience in marginal time with a sustaining program. This is so because so many stations on the network—any network—will decline to carry it. Every licensee who applies for a grant to operate in the public interest, convenience, and necessity makes certain promises as to what he will do in terms of program content. Many recipients of licenses have, in blunt language, welshed on those promises. The money-making machine somehow blunts their memories. The only remedy for this is closer inspection and punitive action by the FCC. But in the view of many

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this would come perilously close to supervision of program content by a Federal agency.

So it seems that we cannot rely on philanthropic support or foundation subsidies, we cannot follow the "sustaining route," the networks cannot pay all the freight, and the FCC cannot or will not discipline those who abuse the facilities that belong to the public.

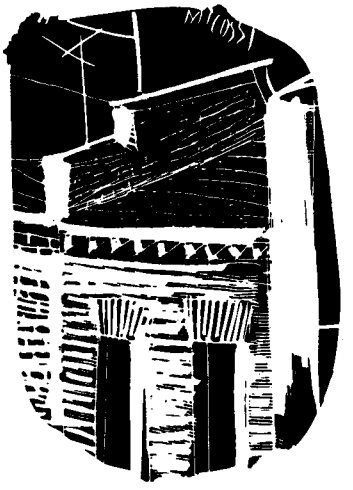
WHAT THEN is the answer? Do we merely stay in our comfortable nests, concluding that the obligation of these instruments has been discharged when we work at the job of informing the public for a minimum of time? Or do we believe that the preservation of the Republic is a seven-day-a-week job, demanding more awareness, better skills, and more perseverance than we have yet contemplated?

I am frightened by the imbalance, the constant striving to reach the largest possible audience for everything; by the absence of a sustained study of the state of the nation. Heywood Broun once said, "No body politic is healthy until it begins to itch." I would like television to produce some itching pills rather than this endless outpouring of tranquilizers. It can be done. Maybe it won't be, but it could. Let us not shoot the wrong piano player. Do not be deluded into believing that the titular heads of the networks control what appears on their networks. They all have better taste. All are responsible to stockholders, and in my experience all are honorable men. But they must schedule what they can sell in the public market. And this brings us to the nub of the question.

Tithe Time

In one sense it rather revolves around the phrase heard frequently along Madison Avenue: "The Corporate Image." I am not precisely sure what this phrase means, but I would imagine that it reflects a desire on the part of the corporations who pay the advertising bills to have the public imagine, or believe, that they are not merely bodies with no souls, panting in pursuit of elusive dollars. They would like us to believe that they can distinguish between the public good and the private or corporate gain. So the question is this: Are the big corporations who pay the freight for radio and television programs wise to use that time *exclusively* for the sale of goods and services? Is it in their own interest and that of the stockholders so to do? The sponsor of an hour's television program is not buying merely the six minutes devoted to his commercial message. He is determining, within broad limits, the sum total of the impact of the entire hour. If he always, invariably, reaches for the largest possible audience, then this process of insulation, of escape from reality, will continue to be massively financed, and its apologists will continue to make winsome speeches about giving the public what it wants, or "letting the public decide."

I refuse to believe that the presidents and chairmen of the boards of these big corporations want their



"corporate image" to consist exclusively of a solemn voice in an echo chamber, or a pretty girl opening the door of a refrigerator, or a horse that talks. They want something better, and on occasion some of them have demonstrated it. But most of the men whose legal and moral responsibility it is to spend the stockholders' money for advertising are removed from the realities of the mass media by five, six, or a dozen contraceptive layers of vice-presidents, public-relations counsel, and advertising agencies. Their business is to sell goods, and the competition is pretty tough.

But this nation is now in competition with malignant forces of evil who are using every instrument at their command to empty the minds of their subjects, and fill those minds with slogans, determination, and faith in the future. If we go on as we are, we are protecting the mind of the American public from any real contact with the menacing world that squeezes in upon us. We are engaged in a great experiment to discover whether a free public opinion can devise and direct methods of managing the affairs of the nation. We may fail. But we are handicapping ourselves needlessly.

Let us have a little competition. Not only in selling soap, cigarettes, and automobiles, but in informing a troubled, apprehensive, but receptive public. Why should not each of the twenty or thirty big corporations which dominate radio and television decide that they will give up one or two of their regularly scheduled programs each year, turn the time over to the networks, and say in effect: "This is a tiny tithe, just a little bit of our profits. On this particular night we aren't going to try to sell cigarettes or automobiles; this is merely a gesture to indicate our belief in the importance of ideas." The networks should, and I think would, pay for the cost of producing the program. The advertiser, the sponsor, would get name credit, but would have nothing to do with the content of the program. Would this blemish the corporate image? Would the stockholders object? I think not. For if the premise upon which our pluralistic society rests—which as I understand it is that if the people are given sufficient undiluted information, they will then somehow, even after long, sober second thoughts, reach the right decision—if that premise is wrong, then not only the corporate image but the corporations are done for.

THERE USED to be an old phrase in this country employed when someone talked too much. It was "Go hire a hall." Under this proposal the sponsor would have hired the hall; he has bought the time; the local station operator, no matter how indifferent, is going to carry the program—he has to. Then it's up to the networks to fill the hall. I am not here talking about editorializing, but about straightaway exposition as direct, unadorned, and

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impartial as fallible human beings can make it. Just once in a while let us exalt the importance of ideas and information. Let us dream to the extent of saying that on a given Sunday night the time normally occupied by Ed Sullivan is given over to a clinical survey of the state of American education, and a week or two later the time normally used by Steve Allen is devoted to a thoroughgoing study of American policy in the Middle East. Would the corporate image of their respective sponsors be damaged? Would the stockholders rise up in their wrath and complain? Would anything happen other than that a few million people would have received a little illumination on subjects that may well determine the future of this country, and therefore the future of the corporations? This method would also provide real competition between the networks as to which could outdo the others in the palatable presentation of information. It would provide an outlet for the young men of skill—and there are some even of dedication—who would like to do something other than devise methods of insulating while selling.

There may be other and simpler methods of utilizing these instruments of radio and television in the interests of a free society. But I know of none that could be so easily accomplished inside the framework of the existing commercial system. I don't know how you would measure the success or failure of a given program. And it would be hard to prove the magnitude of the benefit accruing to the corporation which gave up one night of a variety or quiz show in order that the network might marshal its skills to do a thoroughgoing job on the present status of NATO or plans for controlling nuclear tests. But I would reckon that the president, and indeed the majority of shareholders of the corporation who sponsored such a venture, would feel just a little bit better about the corporation and the country.

'Fat, Comfortable, Complacent'

It may be that the present system, with no modifications and no experiments, can survive. Perhaps the money-making machine has some kind of built-in perpetual motion,

but I do not think so. To a very considerable extent the media of mass communications in a given country reflect the political, economic, and social climate in which they flourish. That is the reason ours differ from the British and French, or the Russian and Chinese. We are currently wealthy, fat, comfortable, and complacent. We have currently a built-in allergy to unpleasant or disturbing information. Our mass media reflect this. But unless we get up off our fat surpluses and recognize that television in the main is being used to distract, delude, amuse, and insulate us, then television and those who finance it, those who look at it and those who work at it, may see a totally different picture too late.

I DO NOT advocate that we turn television into a twenty-seven-inch wailing wall, where longhairs constantly moan about the state of our culture and our defense. But I would just like to see it reflect occasionally the hard, unyielding realities of the world in which we live. I would like to see it done inside the existing framework, and I would like to see the doing of it redound to the credit of those who finance and program it. Measure the results by Neilsen, Trendex, or Silex—it doesn't matter, the main thing is to try. The responsibility can be easily placed, in spite of all the mouthings about giving the public what it wants. It rests on big business, and on big television, and it rests at the top. Responsibility is not something that can be assigned or delegated. And it promises its own reward: good business and good television.

Perhaps no one will do anything about it. I have ventured to outline it against a background of criticism that may have been too harsh, only because I could think of nothing better.

Someone once said—I think it was Max Eastman—that "That publisher serves his advertiser best who best serves his readers." I cannot believe that radio and television, or the corporations that finance the programs, are serving well or truly their viewers or listeners, or themselves.

I began by saying that our history will be what we make it. If we go on as we are, then history will take its revenge, and retribution will not limp in catching up with us.

We are to a large extent an imitative society. If one or two or three corporations would undertake to devote just a small fraction of their advertising appropriation along the lines that I have suggested, the procedure would grow by contagion, the economic burden would be bearable, and there might ensue a most exciting adventure—exposure to ideas, and the bringing of reality into the homes of the nation.

To those who say, "People wouldn't look, they wouldn't be interested, they're too complacent, indifferent and insulated," I can only reply: "There is, in one reporter's opinion, considerable evidence against that contention." But even if they are right, what have they got to lose? Because if they are right, and this instrument is good for nothing but to entertain, amuse, and insulate, then the tube is flickering now and we will soon see that the whole struggle is lost.

This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely wires and lights in a box. There is a great and perhaps decisive battle to be fought against ignorance, intolerance, and indifference. This weapon of television could be useful.

Stonewall Jackson, who knew something about the use of weapons, is reported to have said: "When war comes, you must draw the sword and throw away the scabbard." The trouble with television is that it is rusting in the scabbard during a battle for survival.

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THEATER:

1. A Matter of Motive

MARYA MANNES

HERE WE GO AGAIN, I thought to myself: sodden Irishmen in bars, living in dreams of past glory, running off at the mouth. Has Eugene O'Neill no other preoccupations but self-delusion and whiskey? And for the first ten minutes of *A Touch of the Poet,* I wished again that he had indulged his obsessions less and his audience more.

But by the time Major Melody and his scorned but loving wife Nora and their scornful but passionate daughter Sara were locked together in that desolate tavern room—a fine setting by Ben Edwards—involvement became complete. It was not only possible but imperative to care what a drunken, cruel, hallucinated Irish ex-soldier was doing to himself and his family, why he had come to America in the 1820's, why his wife continued to suffer him, and why his daughter ached with love for a well-bred Yankee dreamer, invisible and ailing in an upper room. Heightened as they were by O'Neill's dark intensity and the brilliant understanding of Eric Portman, Helen Hayes, and Kim Stanley, these were real people in real situations, held together by a structure more solid by far, I think, than that of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* or *The Iceman Cometh.* Even the dialogue seemed to me firmer and tighter, as well as more sonorous, than his usual language. In fact, real beauty of speech—the least of O'Neill's attributes—touched the long monologues of an American aristocrat, Mrs. Harford. As the mother of Sara's lover, Betty Field gives perfect expression to an interval of grace and distinction and wit between the brawling passions of the Melodys. And these, in turn, have a cause and urgency that touch the heart. There was not a dishonest or pandering moment in the play.

'Suzie' and 'Goldilocks'

The same could hardly be said of three other recent plays. *The World of Suzie Wong,* as many must know by now, is an adaptation of a successful book about a little Chinese prostitute in Hong Kong and her pure love with a pure Canadian painter. The background is a brothel, made so desirable on the stage by Jo Mielziner that travel agents must be deluged with Orient

bookings. France Nuyen as Suzie is desirable too. Now there is no reason why a play about a prostitute in a brothel should not be written and produced; it could be most illuminating. And I can hear playwright, producer, and backers saying, right at the start, "After all, the public will take anything now—after *Peyton Place* and *Lolita,*" or "China's the thing now."

The blatant dishonesty lies in filling the stage with pretty whores in slit skirts one minute and then showing a tear-jerking scene of flood disaster in another; and concluding with the implication that the union of Suzie and Bob will be sanctified, while they perform a fire ceremony for her dead baby. Such panderings are more repellant than any honest examination of a brothel could ever be.

One moment, however, I cherished in *Suzie Wong.* This is when a nice young English art expert, female, who also loves painter Bob, tries to woo him away from sin and Suzie to London with her, on the promise that she can further his career by getting him a double spread in the *Tatler.* To those who might be unfamiliar with that glossy reflection of county life, I can only say that its concern with aesthetics is confined to portraits of horses. (Bob paints whores—badly.)

THE KINDS of dishonesties that afflict two other of the season's plays are quite different. The ostensible motive for writing the musical *Goldilocks,* for instance, was the innocent delight shared by drama critic Walter Kerr and his wife Jean (*Please Don't Eat the Daisies*) in the old silent movies. With Mr. Kerr's fine-honed judgment and Mrs. Kerr's gift for satire, this could have been a wicked delight. But what happens is a listless parade of gags and extras and sets relieved only occasionally by funny lines, a pleasant dance, and two spoofs—one of a Western and another of a De Mille Egyptian spectacle—that are Grade A slapstick. Somewhere along the production line the edge was blunted, the direction lost, and the second best found good enough.

I cannot believe that *Goldilocks* pleases the Kerrs, but I am reluctantly forced to believe that they thought it would please the public. The second seldom follows the first.

'The Girls in 509'

Howard Teichmann started off with a glorious idea. He had an old Hudson River Valley dowager hole herself up in a hotel room in 1932 because her indomitably Republican soul could not stomach a Democrat in the White House. Abjuring the now hideous world with her niece as companion, the two ladies make a veritable fortress out of their suite to repel invaders, ensure self-sufficiency, and preserve their Republicanism inviolate. They see no one until their privacy is forcibly shattered, twenty-five years later, by the press and politicians, who bring them belated tidings of a Republican administration.

All this could have been a field day for Mr. Teichmann and an audience starved for political satire. But what could have been full-bodied

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comedy and pungent comment turns into a paper-thin farce in which only Peggy Wood, as the embattled dowager, makes any attempt at living a real part; she believes in Mrs. Vanderwyck. Sabotaging her is a cast of pale caricatures headed by Imogene Coca, woefully miscast as her niece, for anything less like a member of an ancient Hudson River Valley family would be hard to imagine. Here again is the dishonesty: "Let's have Coca play it. She's got a big TV following and her face is funny." It is, but she is neither a trained actress nor a flexible one, and her amateurishness undermines not only Miss Wood's solid professionalism but also the play's satiric intent. To be funny out of context is not to be funny.

IN VERY DIFFERENT WAYS, *Suzie Wong*, *Goldilocks*, and *The Girls in 509* short-change the audience: *Suzie* by selling sex in a true-love box, *Goldilocks* by packaging a small idea in an expensive container, *Girls* by promising satire and presenting slapstick. I suspect that the last two plays were at their best in the telling, and I can understand why producers swallowed the bait offered by such witty narrators as Mr. and Mrs. Kerr and Mr. Teichmann. And I know how much can happen between idea and production, for the theater is an art of compromise and an author is far too often at the mercy of twenty other people, from backer to director to actor, who know better than he what the public is presumed to want. There is also, I suspect, a common fallacy that the author's text of a comedy is less sacred than that of a tragedy; who cares so long as people laugh?

But an honest dramatist must care, deeply, that what he believes to be right, in comedy or tragedy, retains its form and direction on the stage. Eugene O'Neill did while he lived, and fortunately the artists who now project his work care equally: this is a contagion. No middleman has come between *A Touch of the Poet* as he wrote it and as they now play it. And although his stature derives equally from his humanity and his brilliant sense of theater, it is his purity of intent more than anything else that raises him so far above the run of playwrights today.

2. Document of Terror

JOHN ROSSELLI

LONDON

IT IS NOT every day that one can see Mikoyan get up in a tense Communist Party meeting at the height of the Hungarian revolution, point to a man in a shabby gray suit, and call out one word: "Kadar!" He did it early this month on the stage of the Piccadilly Theatre in Robert Ardrey's new play, *Shadow of Heroes*. Mr. Ardrey, author of several plays, including *Thunder Rock*, is also well known as a script writer in Hollywood. In *Shadow of Heroes* he has thrust before a half bewildered, half impressed London audience the story of Hungarian Communism from 1944 to 1956. Mikoyan's one-word part, like the appearance in Ardrey's chronicle of Rákosi, Gerö, Rajk, Nagy, and other villains and heroes of the last few years, startled

playgoers unaccustomed to seeing events on the stage brought to them so hot from the barricades.

So completely has the postwar British and American theater turned its back on politics that the novelty seemed greater than it was. Several of the London critics gave signs of not knowing quite what to make of it: "More document than play," they said, as if that had not been the point. Ardrey himself claimed that he had handled revolutionary material in a revolutionary way. If the critics had had longer memories and if the playwright had not been understandably caught up in his work, both might have recognized that the theater has ridden history on a short rein before. Right on top of the Reichstag fire came Odets's *Till the Day I Die* and Elmer Rice's *Judgment Day*. But not even the anti-Nazis put Hitler on the stage.

Ardrey had gone all out for authenticity. Unable to get to Hungary during the revolution, he had spent months in Berlin and Vienna reading up on Hungarian history and talking to Hungarians. The narrator in *Shadow of Heroes*, a more detached version of the stage manager in *Our Town*, moved in and out of scenes explaining just what was recorded history and what was invented or surmised. "There are at least fifty living witnesses to the next scene," he would say, and from time to time he announced the actors—"Peggy Ashcroft speaks for Julia Rajk."

THERE ARE two kinds of authenticity: literal and emotional. Ardrey got high marks from Hungarians in London for sticking close to the facts. He took as the central thread of his play the story of the Rajks—László, the wartime underground leader who fell afoul of the Moscow-trained leadership and was hanged in 1949 as a Titoist; Julia, who screamed down the intermission curtain while the narrator explained that from her prison cell she had heard fifty-nine men being hanged without ever knowing which of them might be her husband, and who helped to inspire the 1956 rising by speaking out against the Stalinists. Weaving in and out of the story was Kadar, the good working-class Communist sucked down into betrayal after betrayal. A specialist on eastern Europe whom I took to see the play, who had been in Budapest during the revolution and the Soviet repression, picked out some mistakes of detail. "The crowd shouldn't have had weapons in their hands before Gerö's speech on October 23. They only got weapons afterwards." It was that kind of an evening.

How true was the emotional note? Here judgment was beset by special hazards. When I told my specialist that the scenes depicting the revolu-

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tion had seemed to me rather fragmentary, he retorted, "But that's exactly the way it was!" To a number of people, László Rajk seemed too simplified and boyish a hero for a Communist boss, while Kadar's shifting motives were not clearly brought out. Probably in a work of this kind Ardrey could put down only as much of the truth about these men as anyone knew—and that was not very much.

Shadow of Heroes in fact was a highly colored poster, an episodic history play that could not stop long enough to explore character. It took some of the most appalling and stirring events of our time and did them no serious injustice. There is little point in saying that only a great poet could have done them full justice, though one could complain that Ardrey now and then used gimmicks —as when Rajk's orphan son lost his toy bear and cried out for it, not once but twice. As a production the play would have made a splash in any West End season. The director, Peter Hall, used a setting of burlap screens, moved by the actors in view of the audience with a speed and precision that avoided any hint of Little Theater, while Dame Peggy Ashcroft with her crumpled beauty and Emlyn Williams as narrator headed a cast that included some of the best character actors in London.

Moments stayed in the mind: the arrival of the Rajks, returned ghostlike from a Nazi concentration camp, striking dumb a festive group at party headquarters; the stubborn contest between Gerö and Mrs. Rajk over the form of the "rehabilitating" funeral which the party gave Rajk's body a few weeks before the rising; a brief wordless passage when, during the revolution, Mrs. Rajk held out her hand to Kadar and he could not take it—his own right hand was crippled through torture and his left encumbered with a briefcase, the badge of his party secretaryship.

AT THE END, the narrator explained that Mrs. Rajk was thought to be still a prisoner in Romania, and that in the judgment of responsible people *Shadow of Heroes* would not add to the harm she had suffered already. After that there was something awed and stricken about the applause.

3. *The Style of France's T.N.P.*

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

TRUMPETS SOUNDED as the curtain rose on an almost bare stage that rapidly filled with colorful Florentine Renaissance costumes, and suddenly two pages dressed in red, yellow, and black rushed toward the audience furiously twirling enormous bright flags. For an instant, at the Théâtre National Populaire's first performance on Broadway last month, we saw again the Palio at Siena, the celebration of the Calcio in Florence. The Palazzo Strozzi and the Piazza della Signoria were conjured up before us with the first lines of Alfred de Musset's *Lorenzaccio,* so superbly directed by Gérard Philipe that one almost forgot it was not by Shakespeare. The bare stage, the absence of footlights and reliance for effects on the fusing of discreet spotlights from the balcony and sides of the proscenium, the bright and somewhat massive costumes, the reduction of the sets to a minimum of accessories outlined against dark curtains hung on frames of different sizes, and especially the flawless acting of the whole ensemble—these are all marks of the T.N.P.'s style.

The Apprenticeship of Jean Vilar

Louis Jouvet once said to a young actor named Jean Vilar that Parisian producers were merely presenting the public with the familiar fare wrapped up in a new sauce. "In order to do something new, we shall have to have new theaters or else act in the street." Until he had his great chance at Avignon in 1947, when he staged Shakespeare in the Cour d'Honneur of the Palace of the Popes, Jean Vilar had experienced the long and difficult apprenticeship of all good actors. The son of a shopkeeper in a small Mediterranean city, he was born in 1913. His only early artistic training was daily violin lessons; at twelve he was already earning pocket money as a jazz violinist. After desultory literary studies in Paris and intensive work in the theatrical studio of Charles Dullin, where Jean-Louis Barrault was also a pupil, he did his military service and lived through what was then called "the phony war." Married at twenty-eight, he managed to get a wedding trip through war-torn France by joining the traveling theatrical company of André Clavé called La Roulotte. They gave performances all over the country in dance halls, parish halls, barns, inn courtyards, and cafés, generally receiving their payment in food that had escaped the black market.

Back in Paris he staged Strindberg's *Dance of Death* in a private house in the Rue Vaneau. But a commercial theater, which had acquired the rights to the play, put a stop to his performances. He finally received wide critical acclaim in 1945 for the staging at the Vieux-Colombier (sacred to the memory of Jacques Copeau) of Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral.*

At the age of thirty-four, Vilar began his experiments at Avignon in the first move toward a permanent theatrical decentralization in France. Rather suddenly, as a result of his extraordinary success with the festivals, he was named director of the T.N.P., founded in 1920 by the idealist Firmin Gémier and then fallen on evil days. Its home was the Palais de Chaillot in Paris.

The first official theater constructed in Paris in some fifty years, it is huge and cold and acoustically bad. Furthermore, the audience has to reach it by walking through endless hallways and down flights of stairs. But it boasts twenty-seven hundred seats, a proscenium opening eighty feet wide, and a stage seventy feet deep. With a subsidy from the state, and required by law to give at popular prices two hundred performances or concerts each year (the number has since been greatly reduced), Vilar could finally realize his dream of a popular theater appealing to the masses. By the end of the third year of producing the classics of all literatures and such modern dramatists as Brecht, Claudel, Gide, Pichette, and Pirandello, the T.N.P. had rung up the impres-

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sive total of about a million and a quarter tickets sold.

Even today the top price for an orchestra seat at the Palais de Chaillot is a little over a dollar. And for a somewhat larger inclusive price, one can attend a T.N.P. "week-end" consisting of two plays, a lecture or discussion with the actors, a concert, two picnicky meals, and a dance extending on toward Sunday dawn. Furthermore, tickets for all performances can be bought all over Paris in the hundreds of local bookshops that display the familiar stenciled letters "T.N.P." Doors are closed to latecomers, who are led into a large buffet like a railway waiting room, where they may listen over loudspeakers until the first intermission. Anyone who has sat thus through the first act of Claudel's *La Ville* (which lasts fifty minutes) is not likely to forget the lesson.

Soon after the initial staging of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage* in November, 1951, Gérard Philipe, young and already famous, offered to work under Vilar's direction. But despite the fame of Philipe and of the tragedienne Maria Casarès, who joined the company a little later, the T.N.P. under Vilar has consistently avoided the dangers of the star system. In all T.N.P. productions the human element far outweighs all others, for Vilar insists upon "reducing the show to its simplest and most arduous expression—the scenic effects created by the actors themselves. Hence it is essential to keep the stage from becoming a meeting place of all the arts, major and minor (painting, architecture, electromania, music, stage machinery, etc.)"

Like Jean-Louis Barrault on his latest visit to New York, the T.N.P. brought us for their three-week stay at the Broadway Theatre a representative sampling of their wide repertory. Musset's *Lorenzaccio* and Hugo's *Marie Tudor* are typical Romantic dramas with just enough historical color and melodrama to catch the imagination of both the most naïve and most jaded publics. And far from concessions to the student population of New York, the two seventeenth-century classics *Le Cid* and Molière's *Don Juan* are perennial favorites at the Palais de Chaillot.

In the minds of those who know their French classics, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour,* the second offering of the season, represents the most hazardous of the T.N.P. undertakings, for both the Barrault company and the Comédie-Française have already shown themselves supreme in the re-creation of Marivaux' Dresden figurines and sophisticated dialogue. Furthermore, his traditional setting —the precious eighteenth-century *salon* and equally stylized garden—do not fit the austere aesthetic of Jean Vilar. But to everyone's surprise, he used here a rather traditional if somewhat summary set, composed of a small temple of love flanked by four tortured trees, two stone benches, and a formal balustrade. And those accustomed to applaud Maria Casarès when she plays the somber heroines of Albert Camus, the stepmother of Hippolytus, or the star-crossed queens of Victor Hugo, discovered that she could also play the graceful and elegant coquette practicing the intellectual anatomy of love in a charming comedy of errors. Perhaps, after all, there is but one way to interpret Marivaux, and the T.N.P. has clearly demonstrated that it knows the way.

Truman Capote And 'the Army of Wrongness'

ALFRED KAZIN

Breakfast at Tiffany's: A short novel and three stories, by Truman Capote. ***Random House. $3.50.***

The heroine of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is of the type made famous by Christopher Isherwood's Sally Bowles. She is the adorable immoralist, the completely free spirit in a world whose dominating types are usually disgusting; where her true friends—the narrator, who speaks as Truman Capote himself, and a lovable old bartender—can only watch in helpless admiration as she is whirled away from them to one bed after another.

The lovable strumpet, as Isherwood showed, is a setup for a clever novelist with a good ear and a flair for highly polished comedy, and Capote's accurate recording of both the speech and the night life of upper Bohemian New York shows itself in the way he combs in detail after detail of Holly Golightly's life against the background of a fly-by-night apartment in the East Seventies. The time is 1943, not because the war really enters into this society of fashion photographers, South American diplomats, degenerate millionaires, and animal-like Hollywood agents, but because the date symbolizes a society wholly in flux. No one else, however, has the charm of the lady of the story, who is nineteen, devastatingly honest, and in this cold, often phony world can find comfort only in Tiffany's. When she gets the "mean reds," which are far worse than the blues, "What I've found does the most good is just to get into a taxi and go to Tiffany's. It calms me down right away, the quietness and the proud look of it: nothing very bad could happen to you there, not with those kind men in their nice suits, and that lovely smell of silver and alligator wallets. If I could find a real-life place that made me feel like Tiffany's, then I'd buy some furniture and give the cat a name." She has steadily refused to give her cat a name. " 'Poor slob,' she said, tickling his head, 'poor slob without a name. It's a little inconvenient, his not having a name. But I haven't any right to give him one: he'll have to wait until he *belongs* to somebody. . . .' "

'You Got to Want It to Be Good'

This profound instinct for nonattachment, mixed with a certain wry tenderness for those who would like to be attached (the cat, the narrator, the elderly bartender), is the "serious" side of the book, and one that ultimately raises doubts about Capote's ability to bring off the story

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he intended to write. But the purely external side of Holly's character, as seen before one gets to know her or by those who never do, is skillfully done. Capote has caught perfectly the professional accent of New York, the trigger-tenseness of a speech that is always excited, declamatory, on the make. Miss Golightly alone seems to keep cool—Miss Holly Golightly, who can never hold onto her key, and coming home in the dead of night with a new gentleman, cheerfully rings other people's bells so that they will let her in. She is impulsive, she is direct, she is generous—and while she does not get *paid* for anything, she judges a man by his "chic." "Any gent with the slightest chic will give you fifty for the girl's john, and I always ask for cab fare too, that's another fifty." When she discovers that the narrator is a writer, she is reminded that she has never been to bed with a writer, and demands the ages of the more famous. "I can't get excited by a man until he's forty-two. . . . I simply *trained* myself to like older men, and it was the smartest thing I ever did."

A HORRIBLE old Hollywood agent ("Tufts of hair sprouted from his ears, from his nose; his jowls were gray with afternoon beard, and his handshake almost furry") reveals that Holly gave up her big chance in Hollywood. "She says you got to want it to be good and I don't want it, I say well, what the hell do you want, and she says when I find out you'll be the first to know." There is a cocktail party at Holly's. "Except for a lack of youth, the guests had no common theme, they seemed strangers among strangers; indeed each face on entering had struggled to conceal dismay at seeing others there." At the party is a pro-Nazi millionaire, and it is worth quoting the first description of him, for it conveys the acidulous, "social," and hard manner of Capote at his best:

"He was a middle-aged child who had never shed its baby fat, though some gifted tailor had almost succeeded in camouflaging his plump and spankable bottom. There wasn't a suspicion of bone in his body; his face, a zero filled in with pretty miniature features, had an unused, a virginal quality: it was as if he'd been born, then expanded, his skin remaining unlined as a blown-up balloon, and his mouth, though ready for squalls and tantrums, a spoiled sweet puckering."

This is good writing, and—what one should not miss in Capote when he has his eye on a character, not on his own "style"—it is angry writing. For as the narrator reflects, "If Holly could marry that 'absurd fetus,' then the army of wrongness rampant in the world might as well march over me."

HOLLY DOESN'T marry him, but the end of the story is as inconsequential as its background. It turns out that Holly is really a hillbilly who was married to a Texas farmer at thirteen or so and played stepmother to his many children before she ran away. The hoped-for tenderness that Capote tries to build up as a significant part of her life fails, and because of this failure the story turns sentimental when it is no longer clever. The fact is that it is impossible to believe anything of Holly but what we can see before us. Without her patter, her legion of boy friends, her cat, and her guitar, she is nothing. And the failure to make her background convincing starts from the curious doubleness that afflicts Capote's writing. Either he builds up a witty line of social details, seen from the outside, or he collapses into tender and mawkish details that are really private symbols. As Holly herself says about the narrator, he does a lot of "Yearning. . . . He wants awfully to be on the inside staring out," and she pictures him with his "nose pressed against a glass."

The lovable old bartender in the story, the narrator's fellow in respectful admiration of Holly, insists that it is possible to love a woman without sex. "You can love somebody without it being like that. You keep them a stranger, a stranger who's a friend." Yet *Breakfast at Tiffany's* is a love story; the point of the story lies in the narrator's attachment to one who can be attached to nobody, and who, when she gives up her cat in the end, suddenly realizes how frightened you can get from "Not knowing what's yours until you've thrown it away." The trouble with the narrator's kind of love is that it is too easy; it presents us with an image of the loved one that cannot be proved; it gives us the outline without the woman, a "character," not a person.

The Face on the Jacket

Whenever Capote tries to suggest the inner life of his heroine, the writing breaks down. The image of the starving hillbilly child never comes into focus behind the brightly polished and eccentric woman-about-town in her black dress, pearl choker, and sandals. The reason is that the narrator can show us only his "admiration," not his passion, and one of the serious faults of the story is that we are meant, for the explanation of certain passages, to think of the narrator as Truman Capote the author, the sad little devil whose picture is always so prominent on the back of each book. This kind of extraliterary reference violates the imaginative unity of the story; yet in one sense the story has never been unified at all, for the emphasis has been alternately on Holly as a town character and Holly as a Southern waif—never on Holly as a woman. This double vision was a limitation of Isherwood's portrait of Sally Bowles, but what gave *Good-bye to Berlin* its lasting quality was the documentation of Germany on the eve of Hitler, and the humility with which Isherwood recorded the oncoming disaster. For Truman Capote the "armies of wrongness" are indiscriminate: the "absurd fetuses" are really everybody. They are the enemies of those who are truly poor in spirit, like Holly. But we cannot take these "armies of wrongness" too seriously, for between Capote's pity for the hillbilly child and his instinct for the smart Madison Avenue manner, some deeper tone than either—the tone of actuality, which comes from the portrayal of people in truthful relationship with each other—has been lost.

It is a great pity, for Capote is not only a writer of admirable talent, but he has an eye for human weakness, a feeling for those who really are oppressed, that could be devastating. He is not a superficial writer; no one should miss how much he has aimed for in this clever book. But he is a writer for whom the world is all society or all self, public vice or private tears.

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The Field-Marshal Still Says He Was Right

AL NEWMAN

THE MEMOIRS OF FIELD-MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT MONTGOMERY OF ALAMEIN, K.G. *World. $6.*

As far as I am aware, this is the second major biography of the great British general. The first, *Montgomery,* by Alan Moorehead, was published in 1946. Both biographers are deep admirers of their subject.

Memoirs is a controversial book. It chews over old strategic arguments and raises some new ones, with Eisenhower as victim-in-chief. In so doing it skips very lightly over the technical side of military operations; Montgomery's two excellent operational works, *El Alamein to the River Sangro* and *Normandy to the Baltic,* should be at the reader's elbow. And unless one is to swallow whole Montgomery's statements on who was right (himself, mostly) and who was wrong (other people), a small library of military books should be consulted. These would include Eisenhower's *Crusade in Europe,* Captain Harry Butcher's *My Three Years with Eisenhower,* Omar Bradley's *A Soldier's Story,* and Matthew Ridgway's *Soldier.*

The Trouble at Caen

Montgomery's first important tilt with Eisenhower over the Normandy campaign is largely shadow boxing, for he is only too obviously right, but it reveals how deeply the unjust criticism of his slow advance on the left (east) end of the Normandy beachhead in June and July of 1944 hurt him. As over-all commander of ground forces at the time (21st Army Group: Second British and First U.S. Armies), it was his intention, explained time and again to various related high headquarters long before the landings, that the British in the Caen area would do their utmost to attract, pin, and grind down the best of the German forces, including the bulk of armor, while the Americans on the west seized Cherbourg, then got into position for a breakout thrust against relatively thin opposition. Unfortunately, this master plan could not, on security grounds, be disclosed to correspondents. Caen, a D-Day objective, held out for more than a month. The R.A.F. raid that preceded the final attack leveled most of the western part of the city and drew a great deal of press criticism. A little over a week later, on July 18, Montgomery launched a three-armored-division-abreast attempt. It bogged down after limited gains with considerable losses from an antitank screen. By

Montgomery

this time, the yellower specimens of the Fleet Street press were out for Montgomery's scalp. Luckily, Bradley was able to mount his breakout west of Saint-Lô just a week later, and as the German front in Normandy disintegrated all was forgotten.

What wounded Montgomery most of all was Eisenhower's loss of confidence in him in these days. This has been glossed over in *Crusade in Europe* but was nonetheless real, according to the diary of Harry Butcher, who was in almost daily contact with the SHAEF commander. Eisenhower himself does admit that "Every possible means of breaking the deadlock [around Caen] was considered and I repeatedly urged Montgomery to speed up and intensify his efforts to the limit." Bradley is clear and fair on the subject: ". . . Monty's primary task was to attract German troops to the British front that we might more easily secure Cherbourg and get into position for the breakout. In this diversionary mission Monty was more than successful . . ."

Meanwhile, according to Butcher, Eisenhower seems—incredibly—to have forgotten the fundamental strategy of the campaign. June 27: "Just now he is concerned about the slowness of Monty's attack . . ." July 7: "Ike has been smoldering and today burst out with a letter to Monty which, in effect, urges him to avoid having our forces sealed into the beachhead, take the offensive, and Ike would support him in every way . . ." July 19: "Around evening Tedder called Ike and said Monty had, in effect, stopped his armor from going farther. Ike was mad. . . ."

Over by Christmas

Irked, perhaps, by the unspectacular though vital role of the British on the Normandy beachhead, Montgomery laid before Eisenhower a plan of pursuit of the beaten Germans designed to end the war suddenly with a "knife thrust" through central Belgium and southern Holland, across numerous water barriers, outflanking the Siegfried Line of German fortifications on the north, sealing off the northern face of the Ruhr, and advancing to Berlin. The U.S. Third Army (Patton) was to assume a defensive role east of Paris and north of the Loire, be deprived of its hardest-hitting divisions to beef up Montgomery's 21st Army Group, and receive a minimum of supplies while Monty would get the ammunition and gas to win the war.

Naturally there was some objection. Montgomery submitted the plan to Eisenhower on August 22, when the British were still untracking their divisions from the killing ground of the Falaise Pocket, where the German Seventh Army all but perished, and Patton's Third Army on the right flank was already across the Seine south of Paris and hell-bent

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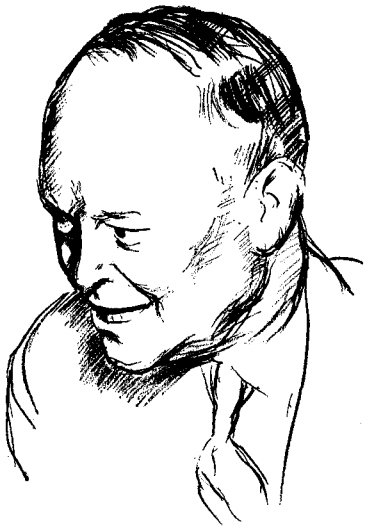

Eisenhower

for Metz and the Saar. Eisenhower resisted Montgomery's brain wave, and certain of Bradley's 12th Army Group staff referred to it as "the butter-knife thrust."

Nobody will ever know for certain, but Montgomery still advances it in *Memoirs* as the plan that would have ended the war before Christmas, 1944, and criticizes Eisenhower for not putting it into operation. However, its general unreality is emphasized by the fact that both Montgomery and Moorehead mention "some forty divisions" as the size of the force for the great thrust. Even at the end of August there were not that many on the Continent. A "strong U.S. holding front" shown on Montgomery's map stretching from Rheims several hundred miles back to the Atlantic would have had less than no divisions to be strong with.

In support of Montgomery's thesis, the Associated Press on October 14 this year, perhaps prodded by *Life*, which has been printing excerpts from *Memoirs*, interviewed General Günther Blumentritt, "Chief of Staff of the Western German armies under Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt," more widely known as Gerd von Rundstedt. Blumentritt was quoted as saying: "I am absolutely convinced that the war would have been over by Christmas, 1944 . . . had Montgomery's plan been carried out." However, it should be noted that von Rundstedt was not in command of the western front at this moment of the incredible German recovery; it was Field Marshal Walther von Model, who, as Bradley writes, ". . . miraculously grafted a new backbone on the German army."

The AP's present confusion is somewhat parallel to what prevailed in higher headquarters at the time. A SHAEF intelligence summary of late August struck the note of overoptimism. "Two and a half months of bitter fighting . . . have brought the end of the war in Europe within sight, almost within reach. . . ." A later operational instruction concluded: ". . . . The only way the enemy can prevent our advance into Germany will be by reinforcing his retreating forces by divisions from Germany and other fronts and manning the more important sectors of the Siegfried Line with these forces. It is doubtful whether he can do this in time and in sufficient strength."

The 'Easy Route'

Eisenhower assumed ground control on September 1, superseding Montgomery, who had held the post as senior army-group commander. Montgomery's rebellion against the prearranged shift in command and the resultant pulling and hauling over the exclusive emphasis on his attack in the north takes up chapters of his comment and quoted documents. In general, Monty's accusations are "lack of grip." He comments on Eisenhower's remoteness from the battlefields at this critical time, in Granville, a picturesque town on the west coast of Normandy with poor communications. He also notes the Supreme Commander's misfortune in being partly immobilized by a knee injury.

It does seem as though SHAEF lost track of a few things, but not so much the things Montgomery is talking about. Bradley mentions that a few days earlier General John C. H. Lee's Com Z (supply) headquarters, in almost direct contravention of orders, had used needed trucking space to move itself from rural Valognes, just south of Cherbourg, to plushy Paris. In addition, transport planes that could have contributed to the supply of fast-moving columns were for some days held in readiness for a drop of airborne troops near Tournai, close to the Belgian border, scheduled for September 3. The ground forces had it

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before the paratroops could take off.

No question, September was the black month of lost opportunities. Every Allied commander saw juicy objectives within reach, but nearly all were without the gasoline and ammunition to seize them. Priority in supply—but not exclusive priority—went to Montgomery for the September 17 attack code-named MARKET-GARDEN. With the aid of three divisional airborne drops, the Guards Armoured Division spearheading British 30 Corps was supposed to take in stride five major stream barriers from the Meuse-Escaut Canal to the Neder Rijn at Arnhem some sixty miles north. They didn't make it.

Even if they had made it, there is some question as to what would have resulted, and the question applies equally to Montgomery's concept of the "full-blooded" thrust in the north. As an attempt to outflank the main Siegfried defenses, both plans accepted the liabilities of crossing a great number of stream barriers at the widest—near their mouths—and of traversing wet, low-lying terrain in between. When Montgomery finally did make his Rhine crossing the following March, he selected a spot many miles upstream from Arnhem for the effort. Even when he was crossing the north German plain in 1945, he records in *Normandy to the Baltic* that "The area between the Rhine and the Elbe was intersected by innumerable waterways . . . over five hundred bridges had to be constructed in the course of the advance." Yet this was his easy route to victory of the previous autumn!

Montgomery makes a rare admission of error in judgment in connection with MARKET-GARDEN: "The airborne forces at Arnhem were dropped too far away from the vital objective—the bridge. It was some hours before they reached it. I take the blame for this mistake. . . ."

Ridgway, who as a paratroop general was an eyewitness to some of the fighting in the Grave-Nijmegen-Eindhoven corridor, blames another factor: "I have always felt, and I still feel, that the sluggish actions of the ground armies in that campaign were inexcusable. A more vigorous command supervision . . . could have driven that armored force [the Guards] on through."

The Tragedy of Antwerp

The Arnhem venture led to the ignoring, at the critical moment, of the great port of Antwerp. On September 4 it had been captured miraculously intact—courtesy of the Belgian underground—by the British 11th Armoured Division. Its approaches were not to be finally cleared until the last days of November, resulting in unconscionable delays and rationing of supplies for five Allied armies on the long front from Nancy to the north from mid-September almost to the German Ardennes attack of December 16. Relatively light forces could have seized and opened the Antwerp approaches if the job had been tackled without delay. But the major part of British Second Army was sideslipped eastward for the September 17 try at Arnhem, and Montgomery's other army—Canadian First—had its hands full with the much smaller and considerably damaged Channel ports to the south.

Ridgway

Montgomery himself says: ". . . Here I must admit a bad mistake on my part—I underestimated the difficulties of opening the approaches to Antwerp so that we could get the free use of that port. I reckoned that the Canadian army could do it *while* we were going for the Ruhr. I was wrong." As is natural, Bradley is more emphatic: "Indeed of all the might-have-beens in the European campaign, none was more agonizing that this failure of Monty to open Antwerp. . . ."

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Memories of Stalingrad

HANS W. HELD

STALINGRAD, by Heinz Schröter. Translated by Constantine Fitzgibbon. *Dutton. $5.*

In Germany, as everywhere else, there are two kinds of books about the Second World War. There have been surprisingly few accounts of personal war experiences in either direct or fictional form, and the good ones, such as Willi Heinrich's and Albert Bosper's, have all appeared fairly recently. A much larger group consists of memoirs, postmortem justifications by generals, admirals, and their admirers, all dreadfully worried lest they not be given their proper niches in military history. Orders of battle, communications to and from various headquarters, and logistical charts are diligently assembled, recorded, and explained for posterity. War is reduced to a battle of wits between reasonably competent strategists and tacticians who, no matter what the color of their uniforms, face similar problems, and who all like to complain about the amateurish interference of political leaders in "their" war.

These books do contribute to the understanding of the mechanics of war. Most of them are of interest not only to military historians and other generals, be they real, prospective, or would-be ones; it is often fascinating for the lay reader to learn about the processes of military decision making, to look at the self-portraits of the great captains and especially at the peevish pictures they draw of each other.

"THE DEAD are no longer interested in military history," Field Marshal von Paulus is reported to have said. Maybe the living are too interested in it, and therefore any honest attempt to show the full spectrum of war ought to be welcomed. Heinz Schröter's *Stalingrad* is a timely reminder of battle, perhaps the most brutal phase of the most brutal conventional war fought to date.

Schröter, a former German war correspondent, actually wrote the book twice. In 1943, he was assigned by Goebbels's Ministry for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment to write the official Stalingrad report. He had access to Hitler's orders and instructions and to the records of the Army Supreme Command. He read the last mail flown out of "Fortress Stalingrad," as Hitler had dubbed it. None of these letters ever reached its destination because, for "information and evaluation purposes," the army field censors removed all addresses and even the names of the doomed senders. Goebbels himself prevented the publication of Schröter's report with the comment "Unbearable for the German people." Since then Schröter has added material based largely on German survivors' recollections.

FOR THE LOWLY PARTICIPANT a thousand incidents make up a battle, and all seem much more real than the battle itself. My own memories of Stalingrad are a jumble of people and events, of gutted houses, of icy winds blowing across the Kazakh steppe, of a landscape muddy at first, snow-white later, dotted by the fire-black craters of shells and the brown and gray smudges of corpses.

Some of my impressions stand out sharply. The bodies of the thousands of German wounded frozen on the road to the Pitomnik airport, their only hope for escape; the haggard faces of the Russian civilians ordered westward out of the city on roads which for most led straight to death from cold and exhaustion; the descents into the rat-filled sewage system of Stalingrad, which drains into the Volga, and through which Russian commandos infiltrated at night before the pipes were jammed with iron girders; the five members of a tank crew who drowned because they mistook a dark-gray patch formed by hundreds of tightly wedged frozen bodies on a canal for solid ground.

Schröter's book is useful because its maps and deployment charts do not conceal this part of the reality that was the Battle of Stalingrad.

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THE UNITED WAY

A Communist Writer Indifferent to Politics

MADELEINE CHAPSAL

THE LAW, by Roger Vailland. Translated by Peter Wiles. *Knopf. $3.95.*

The author of this Goncourt Prize novel is one of France's ablest writers; also, surprisingly, he is a Communist. Or at least he was a Communist for more than ten years—until the Hungarian revolt. Since then he has not made any protest or broken openly with the party; neither has he paid his dues. "I am no longer interested in politics," he says. Unlike Louis Aragon, who sacrificed a first-rate talent to the Communist Party, Vailland has never subordinated his art to politics. He has never allowed the Communist censors to tell him what or how he should write; it can even be said that he has taken deliberate pleasure in writing defiantly in the way the Communists most dislike. His novels—influenced by Choderlos de Laclos' *Liaisons Dangereuses* and the Marquis de Sade—preach freedom, individualism, the pursuit of pleasure, and even libertinism. In short, they stand for everything the Communists condemn in non-Communist writing and stigmatize as showing the hopeless amorality and selfishness of the bourgeoisie.

Why don't the Communists disown this deviant imp? They tolerate Vailland for political reasons and out of coquetry. When a writer like Vailland wins the Goncourt Prize, the party intellectuals can say to their militants, who will not find time to read the book, "You see, we too have our famous authors." And the reading public, the bourgeois, who will read the book, go around saying: "Those Communists are not so narrow-minded after all."

ROGER VAILLAND was born in 1907 at Acy-en-Multien, Oise, of petty-bourgeois parents. In *A Young Man Alone* he has described the small-town atmosphere that stifled any dream of accomplishment. At twenty he rejected all traditional values and joined the surrealists. Later, many surrealists, including Vailland, moved on to Communism as a way out for bourgeois seeking to break completely with their class. Vailland became a journalist, writing feature stories until the war. His fast-moving style is often compared with Stendhal's, and he likes to say that he owes his taste for precision and tautness to the hard school of newspaper reporting. The turning point in his life came when he discovered the *drôle de jeu,* which he used as the title of the novel he wrote about that period. This was the stern and perilous game played, with life itself at stake, by the men of the Resistance.

A Fraternal Universe

To a man, the French Communists resisted the Germans. Vailland discovered what he had sought in vain: a fraternal universe. It was then that he became a party member. But politics had little to do with his decision, and immediately following the liberation, Vailland—the most sociable of men and a fervent devotee of the pleasures of literary society—abandoned journalism to settle far from Paris with his wife in the village of Meillonas in the Jura, where he still is living. He was determined to be a writer, and in order to write—he knows himself well—he needs to be alone and almost a prisoner.

For ten years he has struggled, book after book, to build his talent. He has lived close to the workers and farmers of his village and taken an interest in horticulture. Between periods of hard work, he comes back to Paris for a few days and sleepless nights of excitement.

Like his existence, his books are bound by these two poles: the facts of a society he must discover and describe in depth and a libertine morality he must construct. At first he pursued this twofold goal in separate works, simultaneously

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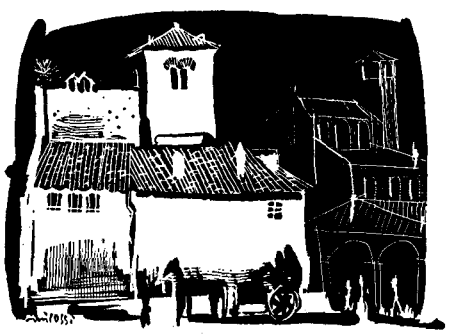
publishing *Bon Pied Bon Oeil,* a novel dealing with the daily life of Communist militants, and *A Sketch for the Portrait of a Libertine.*

Soon, however, the writer sought both to unite and confront his divergent intellectual concepts in a single work. The result, if not always convincing, has been brilliant and unusual. In *Beau Masque* and *325,000 Francs,* the two novels that preceded *The Law,* the workers' world is described with scrupulous accuracy but with surprising aloofness; the facts of society, the conflicts between management and labor, are indeed present but are seen only as romantic events serving to test the hero.

For Roger Vailland is first and foremost a moralist. A man's position in society is of less interest to him than a man's personal quality. This Communist has the morality of an aristocrat: there are only "people



of quality" and the others. Nowadays, he knows, no one is born a man of quality; quality has to be achieved. And everyone has a lifetime to achieve it: "It is only at the very end that you can be sure of a man's quality." What does Vailland mean by quality? It is a virtue indistinguishable from the idea of freedom.

Liberty and the Libertine

Freedom—and here Vailland stands at a great distance from the Communist doctrinaires—is the key notion. Extremely sensitive, like all moralists, to the slightest encroachment on personality or the slightest interference with integrity, Vailland is obsessed with freedom, insatiable in his need for it. He feels a compulsion to re-examine for himself in person and to experience unceasingly the circumstances in which freedom, more or less subtly, is endangered. Such a sensitivity may perhaps be explained by his own need to hold his balance at the brink of a personal abyss. For indeed he himself has had to gain his freedom several times: first, from the social environment in which he was born, then from drugs, then from a poverty that made it impossible for him to devote himself to writing, and finally from the despotism of the Communist Party.

There remains the fact that one of the most pernicious and deadliest enemies of inner freedom is love. Perhaps it is this enemy that inclines Vailland to such an extreme solution as that of libertinism—which contains the word "liberty"—for the libertine seeks to free himself from love without having to give up loving. It may be that the cure is worse than the disease; yet, without entering upon an analysis of Vaillard's ideas, we must concede their timeliness. If *The Law* is a good book, and it is Vailland's best so far, this is because it expresses in terms of fiction the multiple conflicts in which freedom is constantly menaced—perils that mold our individual anxiety.

IN THIS SHORT and brilliant tale, all the author's major themes reappear: the game of power, the game of love and death that only people of "quality" can win—those people, whoever they may be and whatever their manner of life, who are free.

The story takes place at the present time in Manacore, an impoverished little port in southern Italy. The town has its established social forces: that of Don Cesare, the rich landowner ruling over the men and women of his household; that of racketeer Matteo Brigante, feared and respected; that of the chief of police, who alone has the law on his side, but who is a broken reed.

But other forces, the women, superimpose their laws upon the established order, disorganizing and disrupting the balance of power. There is Giuseppina, the daughter of a poor ironmonger, who enslaves the chief of police by refusing herself to him—the process of "imposing one's law," as it is called by technicians of love. And there is the heroine, Marietta (Gina Lollobrigida will play her in the movies),

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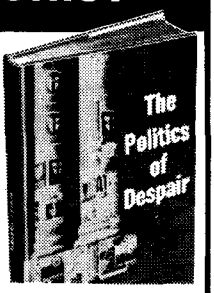

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the daughter of agricultural workers, lusted after by all the powers that be but yielding only to the one she loves, an adolescent, thus demonstrating her "quality" and winning the esteem of old Don Cesare. Other intrigues complete the linking together of the townsfolk, making the relationships into a vast spider's web in which "he is ensnared who aims to snare."

It is then that the author supplies the psychological and symbolic safety valve of a game, a game actually played in Southern Italy, which gives its name to the novel: the game called "the law."

The Cruel Game

Only men play it. In the town café dice are thrown or cards drawn—the medieval cards of the tarot pack: the hangman, the Pope—to select a "chief," who names his "deputy." Thus selected by chance, the chief, assisted by his deputy, has the right, for the duration of the game, to taunt the other players by making use of all he knows about them and their private life.

If the other players do not wish to be expelled from the game and thus lose their hope of revenge, they must submit without sound or movement while the chief "has the right to speak and not to speak, to interrogate and to reply in place of the interrogated, to praise and to blame, to insult, to insinuate, to revile, to slander, and to cast a slur on people's honor . . ." The game of the law is a reflection of the game of life, in which it is as important to know how to submit—when you hold no trumps—as it is to know how to act when the moment comes for action.

The admirably constructed story takes place mostly in sixty hours. Cynicism and tenderness alternate so rapidly—with the speed that characterizes Vailland's talent—that these opposing sentiments end by joining together, merging and enveloping the novel, which is less profound than it seems, with a thin veneer that reflects all the wealth and variety of life itself.

But dominating the love intrigues, the business deals, the violence and treachery, is the friendship achieved in the end between Marietta, always naked beneath her working blouse, and Don Cesare on his deathbed. If Don Cesare had still been in possession of his usual powers, he would, according to his patriarchal custom, have demanded Marietta's virginity. Stripped of his powers, he is satisfied with observing her vitality; in spite of the difference in rank, education, and fortune, he recognizes in her the daughter of his own spirit: a woman of "quality."

ROGER VAILLAND is now fifty. He is not happy about his age because he likes to please women. He has the imperious profile, the deep lines, the narrow waist, and the small feet and hands that one attributes to those heroes who are also Vailland's—the heroes of Laclos and Stendhal, or those who live in the memoirs of Gilles de Retz and Saint-Simon.

When Vailland plans a new novel, he goes to the scene in order to discover for himself, in the tradition of the realist authors, the facts he will need. In preparing to write *The Law*, he lived for three months in a little port in southern Italy. Once Vailland has collected his facts, he goes back to his own village to assimilate all that he has learned and refashion his material into a work of art.

It is true that Vailland's work is somewhat thin; after the fireworks most of what remains is ashes. At least Vailland tries to remedy the general stagnation of today's French writing by moving about; even if his agitation is superficial, it creates the illusion of a fresh breeze. American readers may agree with the French public that Vailland writes in the true tradition of the French novel, in which moral theme and action, self-discipline and unbridled desire, restraint in style and the boldest imagery, go hand in hand.

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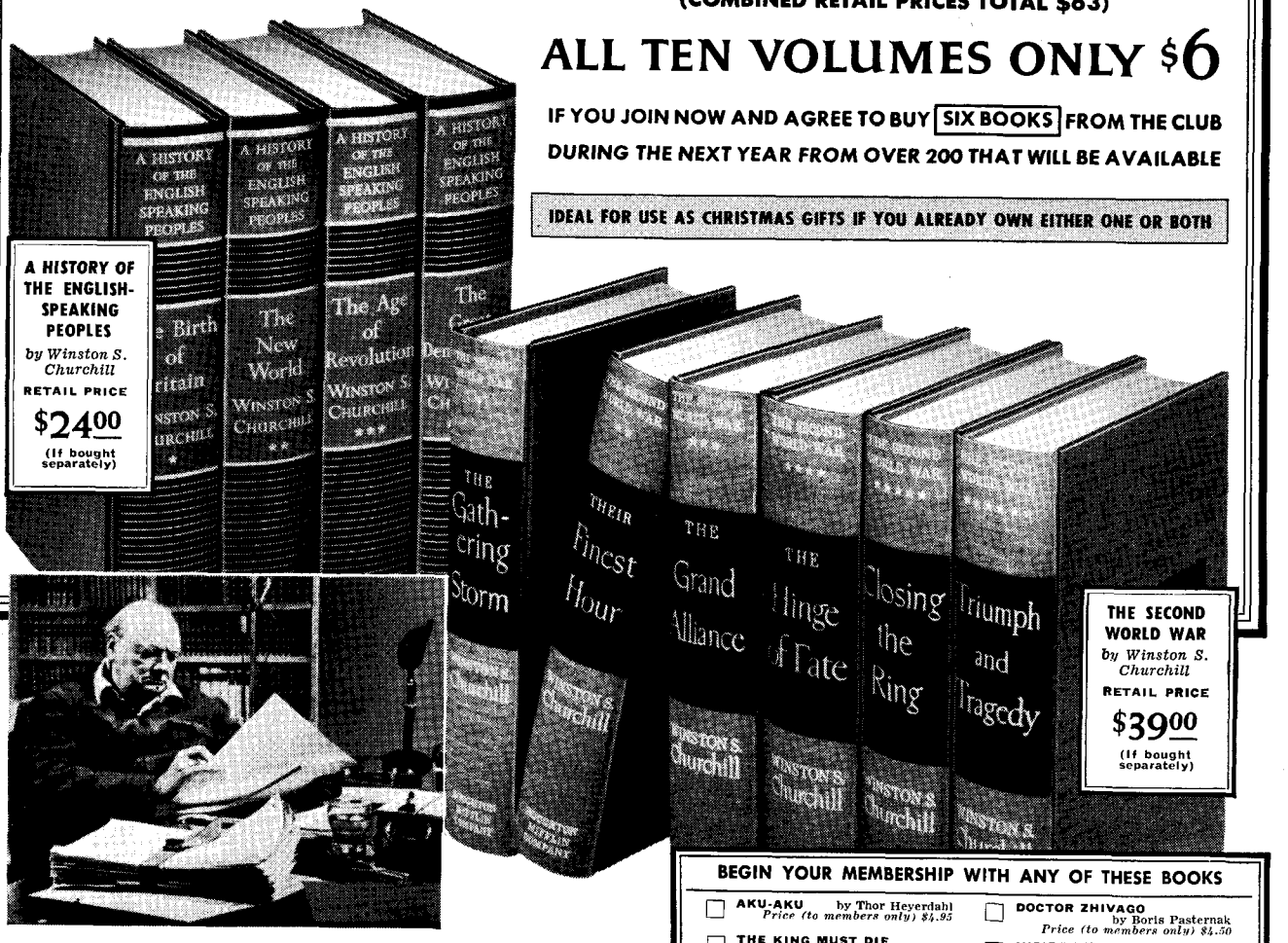

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